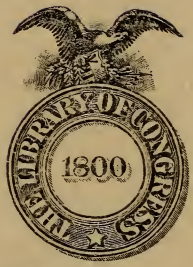

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MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION,

FROM

THE INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY JOHN BROOKES.

LONDON:
JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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Dedication.

TO THE

REV. H. R. WILKINS, B.A.,

Vicar of Farnsfield,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE object of this work is to give an idea of the manners, customs, and curious particulars of our forefathers, which to most persons are the most interesting part of our history. To obtain any thing like a correct idea thereof, it is necessary to consult not only history, but also laws, poems, and biographies. For this few have opportunity or inclination. In this work I have endeavoured to supply what I have frequently found to be a desideratum; and I believe it contains a connected narrative of events not to be found in any other volume. I have made no statement without the most patient research.

J. B.

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MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Manners and Customs, &c., of the Ancient Britons, from the earliest times to the arrival of the Saxons, A.D. 450.

Of the ancient Britons we know little or nothing before the invasion of that great man—Julius Cæsar. It is not till then that we have the personal observation of known intelligent men. Ornaments and weapons have been found from time to time in Great Britain, and acknowledged as neither of Roman nor Saxon workmanship; hence, with the aid of a little scanty testimony,* we may presume that the earliest inhabitants of this country had relapsed into barbarism as they receded from the civilized south—that in the course of their migrations, having lost the art of working metals and weaving of cloth, they were clothed in skins, decorated with beads and flowers, and armed with weapons of bone and flint—and that their stained and punctured bodies must have given them the appearance of the islanders of the South Pacific, as described by Captain Cook.

For size, stature, and fairness of complexion, the ancient Britons were remarkable. The women

*Herodotus, Book IV.; Plutarch in Mario; and Welsh Triads, 4 and 5.

in particular were very fair—fairer, perhaps, than most Englishwomen of the present day, but not so delicate. They had blue eyes, which they much admired, and long hair, of which they were very proud. The last and most earnest request of a young warrior who was taken prisoner, and condemned to be beheaded, is said to have been, that no slave might be permitted to touch his hair, and that it might not be stained with his blood.*

They did what some folk do nowadays—used hair-dye. Men of rank amongst the Gauls and Britons shaved the chin, but wore immense tangled mustaches. Strabo describes those of the inhabitants of Cornwall and the Scilly Isles as hanging down upon their breasts like wings. He says the people of the latter place wore long black garments like tunics, and carried staves in their hands; so that, when walking, they looked like furies in a tragedy, though really a quiet and inoffensive people.† The Britons were not only of good stature, but they were very strong—they excelled in running, swimming, wrestling—in a word, in most kinds of bodily exercises. Their faculties were like their bodies—active. When Julius Agricola came to Briton, he praised those young Britons who studied the Latin language and literature, and declared that in genius they excelled the youths of Gaul. When Julius Cæsar landed on our shores—B. C. 55 years—he found the inhabitants of Kent the most civilized of all the Britons, and differing but little in their manners from the Gauls.‡ Strabo says, "The Britons in their manners resemble the Gauls;" and Tacitus, "They are near and like the Gauls."

* Adams's New History of Great Britain, p. 31.
† Lib. III. ‡ De Bell. Gall., Lib. V. v. 14.

The best informed of the ancient Britons were acquainted with the arts of spinning, dyeing, and weaving wool, &c. The people of Kent practised these arts after the Gaulish fashion, and possessed, in common with their continental relatives, some valuable secrets in them, unknown to other nations. Of this fact we have the direct evidence of Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Pliny; the latter of whom enumerates several herbs used for this purpose, and tells us that they dyed purple, scarlet, and several other colours, from these alone.* But the herb which they chiefly used was the glastum, or woad, with which they stained their bodies, Cæsar says, in order to make themselves look dreadful in battle.† Isidorus describes the British method of tatooing in these words:—"They squeeze the juice of certain herbs into figures made on their bodies with the points of needles."‡ It seems to have been done in infancy, as Pliny tells us the British wives and nurses did it.‖ Their clothing varied, from plaids and simple sheepskins, &c., to the fur of wolves, cats, and rabbits. "By some persons of high rank, the fur or wool was worn inside, while the smooth sides of the skins were dressed and curiously stained with the juice of the *woad*, a plant greatly prized among the ancient Britons on account of a fine blue dye which was obtained from it. With this colour it was the custom of the ancient Britons to paint not only their garments, but also their faces and bodies, in stripes and stars, and various other figures. The effect of the painting was very similar to that of *tattooing*, which prevails among

* Hist. Nat., Lib. XVI. c. 18; Lib. XXII. c. 26.
† De. Bell. Gall., Lib. V. ‡ Orig., Lib. XIX. c 23.
‖ Nat. Hist., Lib. XXII. c. 2.

the savages of the South Sea islands; and, indeed, in various other respects there was a great similarity, in many of the customs of the original inhabitants of Briton, to those of the islanders discovered in modern times in the South Atlantic regions."*

The Britons, according to a Celtic custom, flung off their garments when fighting; and hence arose the error, that they lived always "*in puris naturalibus.*" We have the testimony of Cæsar himself to the fact, that even the least civilized went clad in skins; whilst the southern or Belgic Britons were like the Gauls, and therefore not only completely but splendidly attired, as may be proved from various unquestionable authorities.

Of the several kinds of cloth manufactured in Gaul, one, according to Pliny and Diodorus Siculus, was composed of fine wool dyed of several colours, which, being spun into yarn, was woven either in stripes or in chequers, and of this the Gauls and Britons made their lighter or summer garments. Here we have the undoubted origin of the Scotch plaid or tartan, which is called "the garb of old Gaul" to this day; and indeed, with the exception of the plumed bonnet and the tasselled sporran or purse, a Highland chief in his full costume, with truis, plaid, dirk, and target, affords as good an illustration of the appearance of an ancient Briton of distinction as can well be imagined.†

In speaking of the Belgic Gauls, Diodorus says they wore dyed tunics, beflowered with all manner of colours. With these they wore close trousers, which they called *braccæ* ‡—these trousers,

* Agnes Strickland—Tales from History, Vol. I., p. 25 and 26.
† History of British Costume, by Planché, p. 14.
‡ Lib. V. c. 30.

an article of clothing by which all barbaric nations seem to have been distinguished from the Romans, being made by the Gauls and Britons of their chequered cloth. Over the tunic both the Gauls and the Britons wore the *sagum*—a short cloak, so called by the Romans from the Celtic word *saic*, which, according to Varro, signified a skin or hide, such having been the materials which the invention of cloth had superseded. The British *sagum* was of one uniform colour, generally either blue or black.*

The predominating colour in the chequered tunic and *braccæ* was red. The hair was turned back upon the crown of the head, and fell down in long and bushy curls behind.† If covered at all it was by the *cappan*, or cap—so called from the British *cab*, a hut, which it resembled in its conical shape. The houses of the Britons were made with wattles stuck in the ground, and fastened together at the top. "It is somewhat singular that the form of this ancient pointed cap is to this day exhibited in what the Welsh children call the *cappan cyrnicyll*, the horn-like cap made of rushes tied at top, and twisted into a band at bottom." ‡

The dress of the British women may be ascertained from Dion Cassius's account of the appearance of Boadicea, queen of the Iceni. Her hair fell down upon her shoulders—she wore a torque of gold—a tunic of several colours, all in folds—and over the tunic a robe of coarse stuff, fastened by a *fibula* or brooch. The less civilized tribes

* Diodorus Siculus, Lib. V. c. 33.

† Ibid., Lib. V.; and Cæsar De Bell. Gall., Lib. V.

‡ Costume of the Original Inhabitants of the British Islands: by S. R. Meyrick, LL.D. and F.S.A. It is to this learned author we are indebted for the first general collection of ancient British authorities.

that inhabited the interior of the country went simply clad in skins.* The hide of the brindled ox was generally preferred; but some wore the *ysgyn*, which was the name for the skin of any wild beast, but more particularly the bear. Others assumed the sheepskin cloak, according as they were herdsmen, hunters, or shepherds.† That, in the absence of more valuable fastenings, the cloak was secured, as amongst the ancient Germans, by a thorn, we have tolerable evidence in the fact of this primitive brooch being still used in Wales.‡ They had no shoes or boots, but tied a piece of the skin of a horse, cow, or other animal, about their feet, with the hair outwards.

About the year 78, Julius Agricola succeeded in establishing the Roman dominion, and introducing the Roman manners and language; so that, before the end of the first century, the ancient British habit began to be thought little of by the chiefs, and regarded as a badge of barbarism. Tacitus says, "The sons of the British chieftains began to affect our dress." ‖ "The *braccæ* were abandoned by the southern and eastern Britons, and the Roman tunic, reaching to the knee, with the cloak or mantle, still however called the *sagum*, became the general habit of the better classes." § The change in women's garb was very little, as it had originally been similar to that of the Roman women. One of their garments was sometimes confined by a girdle, and was called in British *gwn*, the *gaunacum* of Varro, and the origin of our word gown.¶ Both sexes cut and dressed their hair after the Roman fashion.

* De Bell. Gall., Lib. V. c. 10. † Meyrick—Orig. Inhab.
‡ History of British Costume, by Planché, p. 20.
‖ In Vit. Agric. § Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 23.
¶ Meyrick—Orig. Inhab.

The ornaments of the Britons, like those of the Gauls, consisted of rings, bracelets, armlets, a collar or necklace of twisted wires of gold or silver, called *torch* or dorch in British, and peculiarly a symbol of rank and command.* So fond were they of such ornaments as torques, that those who could not afford to get them made of the precious metals wore them of iron, of which they were not a little proud. We learn from Pliny that the ring was worn on the middle finger.†

An extremely curious ornament, or piece of armour, was found at Mold in Flintshire, and is now in the British Museum. It has been called a breastplate or gorget, and, although exceedingly mutilated, its form certainly leads to that conclusion. It is of pure gold, three feet seven inches in length, and its width in front, where it appears to have been hollowed out to receive the neck, about eight inches. It is embossed with a figured pattern in various degrees of relief. An elaborate account may be found in the Archæologia, vol. xxvi., p. 22.‡ Necklaces, armlets, and other ornaments of bone or ivory, and of a substance known by the name of Kimmeridge coal, are often discovered in the early British barrows. Some found in Derbyshire in 1846, have been engraved by the British Archæological Society in No. 7 of their journal. In the armoury at Goodrich court, is a most interesting relic of the early period under consideration. It is the metal coating of a shield, such as the Britons fabricated after they had been induced to imitate the Roman fashions. It appears to have been gilt, a practice continued for a

* Planché—History of British Costume, p. 16.
† Hist. Nat., Lib. XXXIII. c. 6.
‡ Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 17.

long time by the descendants of the Britons, and is adorned on the *umbo* or boss with the common red cornelian of the country. This unique specimen was found, with several broken swords and spear-heads of bronze, in the bed of the river Witham, in Lincolnshire.*

The habitations of the ancient Britons were little better than thickets, dens, and caves. Their towns consisted of wicker huts, placed at short distances from each other in a tract of woody land, and surrounded by a trench, to secure them from their enemies. Their winter lodgings, and places of retreat in time of war, being dug deep in the ground and covered with earth, were rendered by art secure and warm. Some of these subterraneous houses are still to be seen in Cornwall. They next made themselves wooden houses, which were not square but round, with high tapering roofs, at the top of which were apertures for the admission of light, and emission of smoke. In short, their houses in shape were very much like sugar-loaves, the holes at the tops serving for windows as well as chimneys.

The most admired and popular virtue of the ancient Britons was *valour*. The older they grew the more sensible they became that every thing in this life depended on their courage. The praises of the bards—the smiles of the fair sex—the favour of the great and rich—the applauses of the people —and even happiness after death, were only to be obtained by brave, daring, and noble exploits in

* Planché—History of British Costume. Much that we have said on costume and ornaments is taken from this excellent work. Should the reader wish to know more about the costume of this period, he is referred to "Selections of the Ancient Costume of Great Britain and Ireland. By C. H. Smith, 1 vol. fol. London, 1814;" and to "Costume of the Original Inhabitants of the British Islands. By S. R. Meyrick, LL.D., &c., 1 vol. fol. London, 1821."

war. Each young Briton looked forward to the time when he could say, "Mine arm rescued the feeble; the haughty found my rage was fire. For this my fathers shall meet me at the gates of the airy halls, tall, with robes of light, with mildly kindled eyes." *

War being their favourite profession, they had many curious customs in the prosecution of it. When an unfortunate chieftain begged the protection and assistance of another, he went to the place where the chieftain lived, with a bloody shield in one hand, and a broken spear in the other. The shield was to intimate the death of his friends, and the broken spear to represent his own incapacity to revenge it. When one chieftain entered the territories of another on a friendly visit, he and his followers carried their spears inverted, with the points behind them; but when they came with an hostile intention, they carried them with the points before. An invading army never neglected to draw blood from the first animal they met on the enemy's ground, and to sprinkle it upon their colours. When two British chiefs or kings made peace, or entered into an alliance, they generally confirmed the agreement by feasting together—by exchanging arms—and sometimes by drinking a few drops of each other's blood.†

Their armouries were furnished with lances, helmets, coats of mail, shields, daggers, swords, battle-axes, bows and arrows, and chariots—some of which are preserved in the armoury at Goodrich Court, Herefordshire. Several dagger-blades

* Quoted by Adams in his "New History of Great Britain," p. 26.

† Adams.

of bronze, of a very eastern form, have been recently discovered. In number seven of the Journal of the British Archæological Association, p. 235, there is an engraving of one found in a tumulus, near Church Sterndale, Derbyshire, in 1846. Another very beautiful specimen, with a wooden sheath lined with cloth, is engraved in Mr. Fairholt's "Costume in England," p. 8. The flat circular shields, which, like their quivers, their boats, and their idols, were of wicker, were soon either imitated in bronze, or covered with a thin plate of it; and then, from their sonorous quality, were called tarians or clashers. The metal castings of two of these shields are preserved in a perfect state in the Meyrick collection. They are rather more than two feet in diameter—are ornamented with concentric circles, between which are raised as many little knobs as the space will admit—and have each a hollow boss in the centre to admit the hand, as they were held at arm's length in action. A smaller one, rather differing in pattern, was found in the river Isis in 1836, and is now in the British Museum.* The chariot, helmet, and coat of mail, were only used by the chieftains. Common soldiers always fought on foot. Their chariots were drawn by two horses—carried one or two men—and had scythes fastened to the axletrees.

One of the most shining virtues of the ancient Britons was their hospitality. Upon seeing a stranger near their huts, they spoke kindly to him, and gave him a pressing invitation to spend some time with them. If he accepted the invitation, they gave him some water with which to wash his feet. If he took the water and used it, and at the same time delivered his arms to the master of

* Hist. of British Costume, by Planché.

the house, it was taken as a hint that he would spend at least one night with them. Then they became merry, a meal was prepared, the harp was brought out, and they passed the time merrily.

The drinks of the Britons were water, the milk of animals, mead, ale, and beer. Before the Romans taught them farming, the strongest drink they had was mead, honey diluted with water, and fermented.

They had also wine, and their feasts were neither few nor far between. Every time they had an opportunity, they indulged in feasting. There was no public assembly, no marriage, no birthday, no treaty of peace or alliance, not even a funeral, without a great and jolly feast. Certainly there is nothing like a good dinner to make a man forget a wrong done to him, and become cheerful and charitable. "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach," says a proverb, and the Britons appear to have known this. Those who made the most and the greatest feasts were the most popular.

Many of their feasts lasted for a week, sometimes more. The guests seldom departed till they had consumed all the provisions, and drunk all the liquor.

They had only two meals a day, breakfast and supper. At supper they ate and drank with great freedom, often to excess. They sat in a circle upon the ground, their only seats, for a long time, being grass, hay, or the skins of some animals.

The meat that was before them they took up with their hands, and tearing some off with their teeth, ate it as well as they could. It sometimes happened that a piece of meat could not easily be separated, in such cases a knife was used, which

lay in a particular place for the use of the whole company.

For some time many of the Britons lived on the spontaneous productions of the earth. When Julius Cæsar invaded this country, however, they had great herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, the flesh and milk of which yielded them a variety of substantial dishes. They used little bread, but ate much meat. They had also venison, game, and poultry, though, through some superstitious fancy, they would not for many ages eat either hares, hens, geese, or fish. The decline of the Druidical religion removed many of the restraints which the prejudices of national faith imposed upon their palates.

Before the Britons became so effeminate through Roman luxury, they did their utmost to make their children hardy, strong, and brave. Even in winter-time they took their little children to some stream or lake, and plunged them right into it, with a view to harden their bodies. Women nursed their own children without having the least idea that it was possible for any one else to do it for them. Parents were not severe, but allowed their sons to climb, wrestle, jump, swim, and run.

Much exercise, liberty, and plain diet, were probably the cause of their having such strength of body and boldness of spirit. They were renowned for the warmth of their natural affections, their duty towards their parents and masters, and their attachment to their family and friends. The members of a clan, or family, were animated with one spirit; and whoever did an injury or offered an insult to one of them, drew upon himself the resentment of the whole.

Their religion was under the direction of priests,

who were called *Druids*, from the Greek word Δρῦς, an oak—because they worshipped their gods in groves of oak. Besides being the priests, they were the physicians, judges, and teachers of the Britons—a tremendous power to be lodged in the hands of any peculiar class. The severest penalty inflicted by the Druids, was the interdiction of the sacrifice to those who had offended them. Woe unto the unhappy wretch on whom the awful sentence fell! He ceased to be considered as a human being. Like the beast of the forest, his life was at the mercy of any one who chose to take it. He lost all his civil rights—could neither inherit land, nor sue for the recovery of debts—and even his nearest relations fled from him in horror and aversion, as from the pest. Unlike the Britons generally, the Druids wore long beards and clothes.* They enjoyed great honours and privileges, and lived in caves or grottoes, where they practised their superstitious rites. Of their temples there are still some remains. The most remarkable in England are those at Stonehenge, and at Abury, in Wiltshire. The remains at Stonehenge consist of 139 enormous stones, ranged in a circle; those at Abury cover a space of twenty-eight acres of land. But the largest of all the remains of the Druid temples is situated at *Carnac*, in the department of Morbihan, in France. It is formed

* The Priesthood was divided into three orders: the Druids, the Bards, and the Ovates. The dress of the druidical or sacerdotal order was white, the emblem of holiness and peculiarity of truth. The bards wore a one-coloured robe of sky-blue, being emblematical of peace. The ovate or *ovydd*, professing astronomy, medicine, &c., wore green, the symbol of learning, as being the colour of the clothing of nature. The disciples of the orders wore variegated dresses of the three colours, blue, green, and white, or blue, green, and red. A disciple, about to be admitted a graduate, is called by the bards, "a dog with spots of red, blue, and green."—See Meyrick and Planché's works.

of 400 stones, varying from five to twenty-seven feet in length, and ranged in eleven concentric lines.

"Among the other remains of the works of the Druids, are the great moving masses, principally found in Cornwall, and called loggan-stones, or rocking-stones. These consist of a large block of stone, so finely balanced on one small point, that though it stands securely, which, in fact, it has done for many hundreds of years, yet it can be moved, and made to rock by a very small force. These loggan-stones were used by the Druids for the purpose of deceiving the heathen Britons. They pretended that, if the stone moved, the gods were kindly disposed, and if it stood still, that they were angry with the people. But these crafty Druids were provided with an instrument which, by placing it under the point of the stone, enabled them to move it, or not, at pleasure."*

The Druids sometimes sacrificed human beings—hundreds of persons, enclosed in large wicker frames, were burnt on particular occasions as offerings to their gods. They believed in the immortality of the soul—in transmigration of souls—in a heaven, and in a hell. Heaven they called *Flathinnis*, which they supposed was a most beautiful place, and only to be entered by the brave, the virtuous, and the good. Hell they thought was a dreary, gloomy, frozen place. They held the oak and mistletoe in high veneration—knew something of botany, sculpture, painting, glass-making, mechanics, and medicine—had an admirable taste for poetry, and a fondness for music—and excluded none from their order, to which merit and long study gave access.

* Agnes Strickland—Tales from History, Vol. I., pp. 8 and 9.

Dr. Brewer says, that it was customary for the Gauls to send their sons into Britain to be instructed by the Druids in law, astronomy, and poetry. The same writer—in his English History, p. 3—says, that the Druids were very celebrated for their wisdom. We are sorry to see such an assertion. We grant that they were better informed, and that they possessed more influence than any other class of men in Britain; but they were certainly not celebrated for their *wisdom*, unless burning their fellow countrymen and deceiving the people with the loggan-stones prove it. Dr. Brewer should have known that what we know is *knowledge*, and that the right use of knowledge is *wisdom*—that of *knowledge* the Druids possessed more than any other class of Britons, but that of *wisdom* they had precious little.

The teachings of Christ were probably introduced into Britain about the end of the first century. "We know that Caractacus, the old British king, was a fellow-prisoner at Rome with St. Paul, and that he was converted to Christianity; and upon the testimony of the British Triads, or ancient records, his family brought back Christianity from Rome."*

Lacius is said to have been the first Christian king in Britain—he died A. D. 181.

With respect to their dead, as far as we can ascertain, they sometimes buried them, but the south Britons oftener burned them. They went so far as to throw on the fire, in which the body was burnt, those friends, servants, animals, and things, in which the dead person had most delighted, and all were reduced to ashes in the same fire! Those who were buried generally had their dogs,

* Bromby—Antiquity of British Church.

swords, bows and arrows, buried with them. Their most splendid and important rite of sepulture was the funeral song. It contained all the good qualities the dead person had possessed, and was sung by a number of bards to the music of their harps when the body was interred. To want a funeral song was thought the greatest misfortune and disgrace, because they thought without it their souls would enjoy neither rest nor happiness in the next world.

The Britons were idolaters, but they were a brave and generous people; and though they were few in number when Julius Cæsar invaded this country with eighty ships full of men, yet he found them energetic, determined, and valiant.

One of the bravest, noblest, and greatest men, of whom the Britons had good reason to be proud, was *Caractacus*, king of the Silures. He resisted most manfully the invasion of Ostorius, by whom he was defeated, and sent with his family to Rome as a noble trophy of conquest. Tacitus relates that the first remark Caractacus made on seeing Rome, was surprise that those who possessed such magnificent palaces at home should envy him a poor hovel in Britain. He was conducted before the emperor, Claudius Cæsar. Going up to the throne, he said to the emperor—"If I had, O Cæsar! in prosperity, a prudence equal to my birth in fortune, I should have entered this city as a friend, and not as a captive; and probably thou wouldst not have disdained the alliance of a man descended from illustrious ancestors, who gave laws to several nations. My fate this day appears as sad for me as it is glorious for thee. I had horses, soldiers, arms, and treasures: is it surprising that I should regret the loss of them? If it is thy will

to command the universe, is it a reason we should voluntarily accept slavery? Had I yielded sooner, thy fortune and my glory would have been less, and oblivion soon have followed my execution. If thou sparest my life I shall be an eternal monument of thy clemency." His bold manly demeanour so pleased the emperor, that he gave both him and his family their liberty. Caractacus was not the only brave, noble, and true Briton, whose names will ever remain in the brightest pages of our history.

The language spoken by the ancient Britons was probably the same as most Welsh people speak at the present time.

The only money possessed by the ancient Britons before Cæsar's invasion, consisted of copper and iron rings. Conobline, father of Caractacus, is said to have been the first who struck the British coin. After the Romans had settled here, new coins were struck by them.

The commerce of the Britons was not very great. Their exports were tin, lead, iron, pearls, dogs, horses, cheese, &c. Tin was the principal export. They excelled in making baskets, &c., of osiers, not only for their own use but for exportation. "The ingenuity of the Britons in this species of manufacture was much admired by the Romans, who, when they introduced into Italy the British *bascawd* (basket-work), adopted also its name, terming it *bascauda*. The British name for a quiver is *cawell saethan*, i. e., a basket-work case for arrows. The ancient British wicker-boat called *curwgll* or coracle, formed of osier twigs, covered with hide, is still in use upon the Wye, and other rivers both of Wales and Ireland." *

* Planché—p. 9 of Hist. of Brit. Costume.

If a farmer's crops were injured by the straying stock of his neighbour, he could seize and keep one out of every three pigs, sheep, goats, geese, and hens, which he found among his corn.

Thieves, robbers, and murderers, were burnt to death. Those who betrayed or deserted the cause of their country, were hanged on trees. Cowards, sluggards, habitual drunkards, and prostitutes, were suffocated in mires and bogs.

The principal diversion of the Britons was *hunting;* the richest and most powerful of both sexes took great delight in it. An old author, in speaking of a couple, quaintly says—"Their course in the chase was one, and happy were their words in secret." *

The period of courtship amongst the Britons appears to have been very brief, generally only a few days. The absolute authority of the father deprived the daughter of power to refuse. Tears or flight were often her only means of escape. The husband was allowed to chastise his wife, or require a legal satisfaction for the three following crimes—infidelity to his bed—embezzling his goods—or abusing his beard!

By the ancient Britons' law of succession, a man's property at his death was equally divided amongst his sons. If any one was favoured, it was not the eldest but the youngest son; for one of their laws commanded that, when the brothers had divided their father's estate, the youngest should have the best house, with all the office-houses, the implements of husbandry, his father's kettle, his axe for cutting wood, and his knife. "These three last things the father cannot give away by gift, nor leave by his last will to any but his

* Quoted by Adams—Chap. VII.

Hunting.

youngest son: and if they are pledged they shall be redeemed." *

The horse was originally an inhabitant of Briton, and so much did the Romans think of the British horses that some were exported to Rome. Donkeys were introduced into England by the Romans. Of asses, the Romans and Spaniards thought much. The Roman women thought their milk, used as a wash, contributed towards whitening their skins. Nero's consort kept a train of five hundred milch asses in constant attendance upon her, so that her bath might often be replenished with their milk. It is probable that the Romans introduced into England rabbits, pheasants, cuckoos, pigeons, turtles, and peacocks. The rabbit was originally a native of Spain. Amongst the Romans the peacock was of considerable repute.

Those whom we now call Scotchmen were in this period called Picts, from the Latin word *picti* —this name was given them from their habit of painting their bodies. The Scots originally came over from Ireland, and settled on the western coast of Scotland. Ireland was at that time called Scotia.

The three plants so highly prized by the Druids were *samol*, which they thought was a remedy for all diseases in cattle—*vervain*, which they said was a cure for every disease in man—and *mistletoe*, which they called the "all-healing plant."

The first name of this country was *Albion*, so called from its white rocks opposite the coast of France, or from *Olbion*, a word signifying rich or happy in regard to its situation and fertility. *Britannia* was the name by which the Greeks and

* Quoted by Adams.

Romans knew this country. It was afterwards named *Britain*. Why it was called Britannia, or Britain, is now doubtful; perhaps from *pryd* and *cain*, two British words signifying beauty and white, or from the word *bryth*, that is, painted or stained—the ancient inhabitants using to dye their bodies with an herb of that name.

Whitaker, in his "History of Manchester," contends that the island derives its name from the Celtic root "*Brit*," which signifies broken or separated, in allusion to the natives being divided into so many different tribes or nations. He also observes that the word *Brit*, in the sense of painted, is the same as Brick or Brechan, the name which the Scotch Highlander still gives to his tartan or plaid, and signifying a garment marked with divided or variegated colours. Sir W. Betham thinks that it is formed from the Celtic *Brit daoine*, that is, painted people.

Some say that the element *tan* is the same word which we find in the names of many other countries, as Afghani-stan, Hindo-stan, Pale-stine, &c., and which appears to mean a land or country.

Bruit was the Celtic for tin, so that Bruit-tan might be the derivation, meaning *metal* or *tin* land, being smoothed down by the Greeks and Romans into Britannia, and afterwards by others into Britain. This is, we think, the real derivation of the word Britain, though we have given the opinions of others on this subject.

The Romans invaded Britain B.C. 55 years, and finally left it A.D. 448. Whilst the Britons were under the protection of the Romans, they advanced much in civilization, but lost their warlike spirit—hence, to them, civilization was a curse. Being unable to repel their enemies, after the Romans

quitted this country, they asked the Saxons to assist them. The Saxons came—drove back the Picts and Scots—and for that service got the island of Thanet. The Saxons soon asked for more land. The Britons did not grant their request, and the result was war, in which the Britons were defeated. After a contest for about 150 years, the Saxons possessed the whole country, which by them was divided into seven independent states, called the Saxon Heptarchy. The seven Saxon kingdoms were governed by as many kings, who were constantly at war with each other, until Egbert, king of Wessex, subduing the other states, became the first sole monarch of England, A.D. 827.

In the reign of Egbert, the incursions of the Danes became frequent in England, and about the year 852 they ventured, for the first time, to take up their winter-quarters in this country. They were a people who originally came from Norway and Sweden, and afterwards settled in Denmark. They derived their name from *Dan*, who was one of their earliest kings after their separation from the parent stock.

In the year 1066, William, Duke of Normandy, invaded England, and obtained a decided victory near Hastings. Harold II. was slain by an arrow piercing his left eye—thus putting an end to the Anglo-Saxon government, which had existed for more than 600 years.

England derives its name from *Anglen*, a village near Sleswick in Denmark, whence great numbers of Saxon invaders came.

CHAPTER II.

Manners and Customs, &c., of the Saxons and Danes, from the year 450, to the Norman Conquest in 1066.

The Anglo-Saxons were a people tall, robust, good-looking, and brave. Gregory the Great, seeing some English youths exposed for sale in the market-place in Rome, was much struck with their intelligent looks, their gracefulness, their beauty, and their robust bodies. He made some inquiries concerning them, and when he found that they and their countrymen knew little or nothing of the teachings of Christ, he exclaimed:—"How lamentable it is that the prince of darkness should have such beautiful subjects, and that a nation so amiable in their bodies should have none of the charms of divine grace in their souls! Their form is truly angelic, and they are fit to be the companions of the angels in heaven." In emergencies they were active—in dangers fearless—and they could bear much fatigue. Like the ancient Britons, they were hospitable; and, like many of the present day, they were too fond of that which, when taken to excess, deprives man of his health, money, and happiness—which is directly or indirectly the cause of nearly all the crime, disease, juvenile depravity, insanity, pauperism, ungodliness, and impurity in England—which costs us annually about £60,000,000. So fond of intoxicating drinks and gambling were the Saxons, that they often played away their persons and liberties.

There were no qualities which the Anglo-Saxons so much admired as boldness and valour; hence they were anxious to know if their sons would possess them. The most common method of putting a little boy's courage to trial was, to put him on the slanting side of the house and there leave him. If the little fellow began to look afraid and cry, the family and friends assembled in front of the house foretold that he would be a coward; but if he clung boldly to the roof, and appeared fearless, they foretold that he would make a brave man and a good warrior.

In size, robustness, and valour, the Danes were very much like the Saxons, but they were rather more fierce and warlike. In their manners and habits they were barbarous—considered war as the only noble pursuit—and were notorious for robbing vessels upon the open sea. Having a most astonishing spirit of enterprise and adventure, and possessing numerous fleets, they rode triumphantly on all the European seas. Wherever they went they were much feared. So much terror and desolation did the Scandinavians carry to the coasts of England, Scotland, France, and other countries, that the people of those countries used to pray daily that they might be preserved from their destructive visits. The Danes were born in camps or fleets: the first things they saw were fearless feats of arms, battles, slaughter, and blood, in which they soon delighted: their childhood and youth were spent in boxing, wrestling, fighting, running, climbing, &c.; as soon as they could talk, they were taught to sing the brave deeds of their forefathers—most of their tales were about fighting, defeating their enemies, and plundering their countries, burning cities, piratical expeditions, and

the booty and glory obtained thereby. The education they received was one calculated to harden their souls and bodies—make them robust and fearless—anxious to handle arms, and to mix with their fathers, brothers, and comrades. One of their martial laws was, that a Dane, who wished to acquire the character of a brave man, should always attack *two* enemies—stand firm and receive the attack of *three*—retire only one pace from *four* —and flee from no fewer than *five*.* Such was the awe in which the Danes were held by the people of this country, that in speaking of them they invariably styled them the lord-danes. From this custom probably the word *lur-dane*, signifying a rich and idle man, had its origin. It is sometimes to be found in books written as late as the reign of Elizabeth, and is still used in some parts of England.

The Anglo-Saxons and Danes were rude and uncouth in their address, and haughty in their deportment; but, bad as their manners were, they appear to have been better than those of the Welsh, for it was thought necessary to make a law, "that none of the courtiers should give the queen a blow, or snatch any thing with violence out of her hands, under the penalty of forfeiting her majesty's protection." †

The Anglo-Saxons were divided into three classes, the noble, the free, and the servile. The nobles or thanes were a numerous class, comprehending all the great landholders in England. They filled the place of our present peers, some of whom are said to be their descendants; for William I. changed the title of thane into that of *baron* or

* Quoted by Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, pp. 70-1.
† Ibid.

lord, and invested them with some new privileges, which may be considered the origin of our House of Lords.

The freemen were called *ceorls*, and were chiefly employed in husbandry. They cultivated the lands, which the thanes let to them on long leases, at very low rents. If one of this class prospered so well as to acquire the property of five hides of land, on which there was a church, a kitchen, a bell-house, and a great gate, or if he became a priest, he was esteemed a thane. The only vocations which were thought respectable for this class to follow, were farming, commerce, literature, and arms. From the word *ceorl* we have *carle* or *churl*, which we sometimes apply contemptuously to ill-mannered persons—its original meaning was merely a farmer or husbandman.

The servile class, called also villains, thralls, serfs, slaves, or villagers, was the most numerous in the country, and, being the property of their masters, were incapable of holding any property themselves. They were of two kinds, household and rustic; both were bought, sold, and transferred like cattle with the land. The master's power over his slave, however, was not quite unlimited; for, if he beat out his eyes or teeth, the slave might claim his liberty. If he wounded him, and he died within a day after receiving the wound, the master had to pay a fine to the king. Rustic slaves were called *villani* or *villains*, because they lived at the villages belonging to their masters, and did the servile work on their lands. The word *villain*, like many other words in our language, has undergone a change in meaning.

For a knowledge of the costume of this period, we are greatly indebted to the early illuminators,

each of whom invariably portrayed every personage dressed according to the fashions of his own time. Had these artists indulged their fancies in the invention of dresses, instead of faithfully copying that which they daily saw, we should have known much less than we do on this subject.

The general civil costume of the Anglo-Saxons, from the eighth century to the end of the period under consideration, consisted of a linen shirt, a linen or woollen tunic, according to the season, descending to the knees, and having long close sleeves; and over this was worn a short cloak, like the Roman *pallium* or Gaulish *sagum*, fastened sometimes on the breast, and sometimes on one or both shoulders, with brooches or fibulæ. The linen or woollen tunic, or blouse, was often fastened with a belt round the waist, and was much like the present smock-frock. Its Saxon name was *roc* or *rooc*, and it was either plain or ornamented round the collar, waist, and borders, according to the rank of the wearer. That of Charlemagne was bordered with silk, "Tunicam quæ limbo serico ambiebatur." * Many people are not aware that the smock-frock worn by farmers' assistants and others, is a pure piece of Saxon costume; and it ought never to be superseded by the ugly and tasteless stiff-cut coats, &c., much in vogue in our time. The well-made smock-frocks, reaching to the knees, certainly look much better than any coats we ever saw the "labouring class" wear.

Drawers reaching half-way down the thigh, and stockings meeting them, may be seen in most Saxon illuminations; they are alluded to by writers under the names of *brech* and *hose*. Eginhart informs us that the *femoralia* or drawers of Charle-

* Eginhart—Life of Charlemagne.

magne were of linen. "*Scin hose* and leather hose are also mentioned, and may mean a species of buskin, or short boot now and then met with, or literally leathern stockings. Over these stockings they wore bands of cloth, linen, or leather, commencing at the ankle and terminating a little below the knee, either in close rolls, like the haybands of a modern ostler, or crossing each other sandal-wise, as they are worn to this day by the people of the Abruzzi and the Apennines, and in some parts of Russia and Spain."* From the ancient canons we learn that the monks were commanded to wear them of linen, to distinguish them from the laity, who wore woollen. In some illuminations may be seen a kind of half stocking or sock, worn over the hose instead of the bandages. Probably this was the Saxon *socca*. At the top it is generally bordered, and reminds one of the Scotch stocking, which from the red cross-gartering imitated upon it, is perhaps a relic of the ancient Saxon or Danish dress.

The Saxon shoes are usually painted black, with an opening down the instep, and fastened by a thong. Labourers are generally represented barelegged, but seldom barefooted.

The garments just mentioned composed the dress of all classes of society, from the king to the poor man: the same articles of dress appear to have been common to Anglo-Saxons of all conditions. The wealthy were distinguished from the poor by the ornaments and richness, not the form, of their apparel. On some occasions the rich wore the tunic longer and the mantle somewhat larger, but it was not often they did so.

Towards the end of this period the national cos-

* Planché's Hist. of Brit. Costume, page 34.

tume became more magnificent. In the men the taste for finery degenerated into effeminacy. Like some lap-dogs, they wore metal collars, and not unfrequently precious stones, round their necks. Silk, which was known as early as the eighth century, but from its costliness must have been very rare, was at this time much worn by rich folk. Bede mentions silken palls of exquisite workmanship, and we read that his soul's temple was enclosed in silk, as were those of Dunstan and other celebrated men. So clever were the Anglo-Saxon ladies at weaving and embroidery, &c., that on the continent their work went by the name of *Anglicum opus*.* A variety of colours appears to have been much admired. In the illuminations, red, blue, and green are the most common. The hose are generally red or blue.

The Anglo-Saxon females of all ranks wore long loose garments reaching to the ground, distinguished in various documents by the names of the tunic, the *gunna* or gown, the *cyrtle* or kirtle, and the mantle. The British gown was a short tunic with sleeves reaching to the elbows, and worn over the long tunic. The Saxon *gunna* was also sometimes short, but there is sufficient authority to prove that a similar description of vestment was called a kirtle. No short tunics are, however, visible in Saxon illuminations, and we must presume, therefore, that the *gunna* or gown generally means the long full robe, with loose sleeves, worn over the tunic; and the kirtle an *inner* garment. The sleeves of the tunic, reaching in close rolls to the wrist, like those of the men, are generally confined there by a bracelet, or terminate with a fine border, and the mantle hangs

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 36.

down before and behind, covering the whole body.*

The head-dress of all ranks of women was a veil, or long piece of linen or silk wrapped round the head and neck. In the illustrations this part of their dress is exceedingly unbecoming, perhaps partly owing to the want of skill in the artist. The head-gear was seldom worn except when they went from home, as the hair itself was cherished and ornamented with as much attention as in modern times. In the Anglo-Saxon poem of "Judith," the heroine is called "the maid of the Creator with twisted locks."

Hose or *socca* were most probably worn by women as well as men, but they are always concealed by the gown or tunic. Their shoes appear similar to those of the men. Gloves were not worn by either sex before the eleventh century, though doubtless they had substitutes; sometimes the loose sleeves of the gown supplied their place by being brought over the hand, and sometimes the mantle is made to answer the same purpose. Cloth, silk, and linen were of course the principal materials of which their dresses were made. Very little white is observed in women's costume —the prevailing colours with both sexes were red, blue, and green.

The dress of the soldiers was very much like that of the civilians. The Saxons were all soldiers, as their successors the Danes were all sailors. Each man carried a spear or a sword—to go unarmed was enjoined in the ancient canons as a severe penance. Hence the addition of a shield; and sometimes, but not invariably, a helmet, was only wanting to make a man as ready for the

* Planché.

field of battle as for the feast. Coverings for the head are very rare in paintings representing peaceful operations; but in battle we perceive a cap or helmet, somewhat conical in shape, and apparently made of leather, and sometimes bound and bordered with metal. The "leather helme" is often mentioned by the Saxon writers; so is the *fellen hœt*, the felt or woollen hat, which is the same sort of cap made of those materials. Their weapons were all of iron, and consisted of long broadswords double-edged, daggers, javelins, and long spears, some of which were barbed, and others broad and leaf-shaped; also axes with long handles, which they called bills, and which continued in use almost to our time. Their shields were oval and convex, the bodies of which were made of leather, and the rims as well as the bosses were of iron, either painted or gilt. Spurs appear in the Saxon illuminations; they had no rowels, but a simple point like a goad, and were therefore called *pryck* spurs, and the goad itself the *spur speare*. They were fastened with leathers, nearly as at present.*

"Long hair was the distinguishing characteristic of the Teutonic tribes. It was a mark of the highest rank amongst the Franks, none of whom, but the first nobility and princes 'of the blood,' were permitted to wear it in flowing ringlets, an express law commanding the people to cut their hair close round the middle of the forehead. The beard was also held by them in the greatest reverence, and to touch it stood in lieu of a solemn oath. Amongst the Anglo-Saxons the law made no invidious distinctions; but the clergy preached for centuries against the sinfulness of long hair, which seems most perversely to have grown the faster for

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 46.

the prohibition. In the illuminations it appears not ungracefully worn, being parted on the forehead, and suffered to fall naturally down the shoulders: the beard is ample, and generally forked, and the character of the face immediately designates the age wherein the early portraits of Christ, which have been reverently copied to the present day, were originally fabricated." *

The practice of tattooing or puncturing the skin —considered as a badge of courage and nobility amongst the savages of the South Pacific—was not unknown or unadmired by the Saxons. We know not whether it was a national custom originally, or adopted in imitation of the Britons; but that they practised it in the eighth century is proved by a law having been passed against it in 785.† Even as late as the Norman conquest we find included in the list of prevailing English vices, that of puncturing designs upon the skin; from which it appears that the goddess Fashion was too strong for the legislature, as she is now too mighty for good taste and common sense.

The ornaments of the Anglo-Saxons consisted of gold and silver chains, crosses, bracelets of gold, silver, or ivory, golden and jewelled belts, strings of amber and other beads, rings, brooches, buckles, &c. The metal articles were sometimes beautifully enamelled. A jewel of gold, enamelled and circumscribed, "Ælfred me haet gewercan," *Alfred ordered me to be made*, was found in the isle of Athelney, whither that good king retired on the invasion of Godrun. Some suppose it to have been the top of a small staff or sceptre. It is now in the Ashmolean museum. The ring of King

* Planché—pp. 38 and 39 of Brit. Costume.
† Wilkin's Concilia, Tom. I.

Athelwulf, Alfred's father, is in the British Museum, and has been engraved by Shaw in his "Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages." *

Golden head-bands, half circles of gold, neck-bands, and bracelets, are often mentioned in Anglo-Saxon wills and inventories. The head-band was sometimes worn over the veil or head-cloth. Amongst other ornaments we read of ear-rings, golden vermiculated necklaces, a neck cross, and a golden fly beautifully ornamented with precious stones. † Amber beads are often found in Saxon tumuli.

Of the dress of the Danes we know little, but that little enables us to ascertain, that in many respects it resembled that of the Anglo-Saxons. From various passages in the Welsh chronicles, and the old Danish ballads, we learn that the favourite, if not the general, colour of the ancient Danish dress was black. Black, amongst the Pagan Danes, had certainly no funeral associations connected with it. In representations of Saxon burials there is no black to be seen; and, though the Danes' costume was of that colour, yet it is well known that they never mourned for the death of even their nearest or dearest friends. ‡

Arnold of Lubeck describes the whole nation as originally wearing the garments of sailors; but that, in process of time, they became wearers of scarlet, purple, and fine linen. It may be supposed, therefore, that on their conversion to Christianity they cast their "'nighted colour off," and that on their settling in England they endeavoured to outshine the Saxons; for we are told that "the Danes

* Planché. † See Planché, Strutt, and Turner.

‡ This fact is distinctly mentioned by Adam of Bremen in his Ecclesiastical History. He flourished about 1127—see Sharon Turner's Hist. of Eng., Vol. I. p. 30, note.

were effeminately gay in their dress, combed their hair once a day, bathed once a week, and often changed their attire: by these means they pleased the eyes of the women, and frequently seduced the wives and daughters of the nobility." *

In June, 1766, some workmen repairing Winchester Cathedral, discovered a monument wherein was contained the body of Canute. It was remarkably fresh—had a wreath or circlet round the head, and several other ornaments, such as gold and silver bands. On one of his fingers was a ring, in which was set a remarkably fine stone, and in one of his hands was a silver penny.†

The materials of which their clothes were made must have been very splendid and expensive. Bracelets of massive gold, and some of them curiously wrought, were worn by all persons of rank, and were buried with them. The common oaths of the Danes were, "by the shoulder of their horse," or "by the edge of their sword;" but Alfred caused them to swear by their holy bracelet. The Pagan Danes had a sacred ornament of this kind kept upon the altar of their gods, or worn round the arm of the priest, by which their most solemn vows were made.

Of their pride in their long hair, and the care they took of it, we have several instances recorded. Harold Harfage, that is, Fair-locks, made a vow to his *belle* to neglect his precious curls, which reached to his waist, till he had completed the conquest of Norway for his "love;" and a young Danish warrior, going to be beheaded, begged of his executioner that his hair might not be touched

* John Wallingford—printed in Gale's Historicæ Britannicæ et Anglicanæ Scriptores, 2 vols. folio, Oxford, 1689—91.

† Archæologia—Vol. III. p. 890.

by a slave, nor stained with his blood.* A few years after their settlement in this country, the fashion of cropping the hair was imported from France. William of Malmsbury complains that, in the time of the Confessor, the English had transformed themselves into Frenchmen and Normans, adopting not only their strange manner of speech and behaviour, but also the ridiculous and fantastic fashions of their habits—wearing shorter tunics, and clipping their hair and shaving their beards, leaving, however, the upper lip still unshorn.†

The armour of the Anglo-Danes was similar to that of the Anglo-Saxons of the tenth century. Their offensive weapons were the spear, the sword, the bow, and particularly the double-bladed axe. The Danes could use the bow, but the Saxons had totally neglected archery. With respect to defensive armour, it is probable that "the tunic covered with rings," the "ringed armour," the "scaly mail," "the shining iron rings," the "battle-mail by hard hands well locked," did not become general till the continual descents of the heavily-armed Danes compelled the Saxons to assume defences equal to those of their enemies. *Mael* was the British word for iron, so that "*coat of mail*" means coat of iron. The Norman-French were the first who gave the name of *mail* to the tunic covered with rings. The other defensive armour of the Saxons and Danes was the shield, and the helmet with the nasal.

The dwellings of the English during the Anglo-Saxon government were hovels built of wood or

* Jomswikinga Saga, in Bartholinus de Caus. Contempt. Mort., Lib. I. c. 5.

† Hist. Reg. Ang., Lib. III.

earth, and thatched with straw or the branches of trees. Their houses were full of crevices; even the best built ones were no exception. To prevent the currents of air from putting out the lights of Alfred the Great, he invented lanterns. Their largest and best buildings were constructed of wood, and covered with thatch. For fine buildings they had no taste. They made no improvement in architecture for two hundred years after their arrival here, the reason for which appears to be, that wherever the Danes went, they invariably burnt all the houses, monasteries, &c., they came to. Towards the end of the Heptarchy the Saxon kings lived chiefly at Winchester, in Hampshire. The houses of the most wealthy had glass windows; but the huts in which poor people lived, had only a small hole with a bit of horn for a window. There was only one sort of floor to any house, and that was the bare ground strewed with rushes, which by the wealthy were often changed, but by the poor often allowed to remain till the dirt and smell became far from agreeable. Stoves and chimneys were unknown. The fire was made upon the floor, and the smoke made its escape either through the doorway, or through a hole in the roof.

The furniture was somewhat rude, heavy, and ill-looking. This they knew; for, to hide the defects of their coarse carpentry, they covered it with needle-work. Benches and stools with coverings are mentioned as their seats. The needle-work was much ornamented with pictures of animals and flowers. After the introduction of spinning, women were so constantly employed at the *distaff* that it became the symbol of the sex; and at the present time, when the bans of matrimony are

published, those women who have not been previously married, are sometimes called *spinsters*. The king's palace was hung with needlework done by Saxon ladies, his bed had a board at the head and another at the feet, a curtain hung on the side farthest from the wall, his bed and pillow were only straw, and his coverlet the skin of a bear. "Their tables were occasionally very costly, being sometimes of silver and gold, but generally of wood; they were sometimes inlaid with gold, silver, and gems." * Bells of different sizes, candlesticks, silver mirrors, beds and bed-hangings, and coverlets made from the skins of bears and other animals, were used by the Saxons.

The Saxons and Danes lived chiefly upon pork and fish, drank large quantities of ale and mead, &c., and often ate and drank to excess. The thanes spent the greater part of their time in giving entertainments to their friends and followers. Their feasts were much more remarkable for *quantity* than *quality;* for instance, the Danish inhabitants of Northumberland, in particular, were fond of horse-flesh, which they devoured in great quantities. The wealthy sat at a table raised above that of the inferior guests; on the raised table at one end of the room were the best provisions, wines, &c., which could be obtained, but we read that the servants had little but black bread, and a very common sort of beer. From the paintings of some of the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, a knowledge of their customs at table may be gathered. In the engraving of an Anglo-Saxon dinner-party from the Cotton. MS., Tib. C. 8, the table is of an oval form, and covered with a cloth. Upon it there is a knife, a spoon, a bowl with a

* Smith's Pic. Hist. of Eng., p. 80.

fish; and there are two other dishes, and some loaves of bread. At each end of the table are two attendants upon their knees, with a dish in one hand, and in the other a spit holding a piece of meat, which they are presenting to the guests. In other drawings of the manuscripts, the table is of a different form, ladies are represented as present, and the two sexes are arranged apparently without any precise order.

Cups of gold and silver were used—also of bone and wood. Horns were much used at table. A curiously carved horn of the Anglo-Saxon times is still preserved in York cathedral. Glass vessels were little known in this country previous to the Norman Conquest. A disciple of Bede applied to Lullus, in France, to know if there was any man in that neighbourhood who could make glass vessels well—he said, "For we are ignorant and helpless in this art." *

The Anglo-Saxon kings, queens, and nobility, lived in a kind of rude pomp, and were surrounded by a crowd of officers, servants, and others. Canute never appeared in public, nor made a journey without three thousand armed men about him. Both Saxons and Danes appear to have been fonder of feasting and merry-making than the ancient Britons. Every time they had an opportunity of eating and drinking, they did so. Think of a house in which a dead body lay till it was put in the grave. What a scene of continued feasting, singing, dancing, and all sorts of merriment! In some places in the north they kept the dead unburied till they had consumed, in feasting, games, &c., all the money the poor man had left behind him. This custom prevailed in times of

* Smith's Pic. Hist. of Eng., pp. 142, 143.

paganism, as well as for some time after; for, though the church discouraged it, it was too agreeable to their great fondness for feasting and a jolly life, to be soon done away with.

Bede tells us that, as early as the seventh century, it was customary at convivial meetings to hand a harp from one person to another, and that every one present played upon it in turn, singing a song to the music. This may be presumed to have been the case when the professional harper was not present, whose business was to amuse the company.

The most important characters at the festivals and other popular gatherings of the Anglo-Saxons, were the *gleemen* or merry-makers, and the "harpers." The gleemen were jugglers and pantomimists as well as minstrels, and they were accustomed to associate themselves in companies, and amuse the spectators with feats of strength and agility, dancing and sleight-of-hand tricks.

Among the minstrels who came into England with William the Conqueror, was one named Taillefer, of whom it is related that he was present at the battle of Hastings, and took his place at the head of the Norman army, inspiriting the soldiers by his songs. Before the battle commenced, he advanced on horseback towards the English lines, and casting his spear three times into the air, caught it each time by the iron head, and then threw it among his enemies, one of whom he wounded. He then drew his sword and threw it into the air, catching it as he had done the spear with such dexterity, that the English who saw him believed that he was gifted with the power of enchantment.*

* Smith's Pic. Hist. of Eng., p. 137.

Feasting.

The term minstrel—in Norman-French *ministraulx*—came into use in England soon after the Conquest, at which time, it is believed, that the class of minstrels and jesters became much more numerous. They enjoyed many privileges, and travelled from place to place, in time of war as well as of peace, in perfect safety; their persons were held sacred, and they were received wherever they went with the warmest welcome and hospitality. Those who had lived in the south of France were called *troubadours*—those in the northern provinces, *trouvères*. These poets became known throughout Europe for their songs of love and war, in which they celebrated the beauty of women and the achievements of the brave.

In England the professors of the minstrel's art were of various classes, which were distinguished by the various names of singers, relaters of heroic actions, jesters, balancers, jugglers, and story-tellers. About the end of this period every great baron kept a jester as a part of his household establishment. The word jester, in its original sense, did not necessarily mean joker, or buffoon, but a teller of tales; which might be of a kind to excite either laughter or pity. The jesters, however, were usually employed at feasts, and in the hours of conviviality; and they found the tales of merriment so much more popular at such times, that it is probable the most serious part of their vocation fell into disuse. In later times the jesters and japers became mere merryandrews, whose business it was to excite mirth by jokes and ludicrous gesticulations.*

We learn from a letter of St. Jerome to Dardanus—*de diversis generibus musicorum instrumentis*

* Smith.

—the musical instruments which were in use in the fifth century. He mentions the organ—various kinds of trumpets—the cithar, in the form of a Greek delta (Δ), with twenty-four strings—the psalterium, a small harp of a square form, with ten strings—the tympanum, or hand-drum—and several others. In the ninth century we read that the number of musical instruments had increased to as many again. In the tenth century, Bishop Elfega caused to be made, for the church at Winchester, an organ which, in size and construction, surpassed any that had hitherto been seen. This organ was divided into two parts, each having its bellows, its key-board, and its player—twelve bellows above, and fourteen below, were set in motion by sixty-six strong men, and the wind was passed along forty valves into four hundred pipes, arranged in groups of ten, and to each of these groups corresponded one of the twenty-four keys of each key-board. Its sounds are said to have been heard over the whole town.* Among the Anglo-Saxons, the music upon which the greatest attention was bestowed, was that employed in the services of religion. Singing in churches is said to have been introduced into England in the fourth century. Musical notes were invented by Guido Aretino, a monk in Italy, during the reign of Edward the Confessor.

The Saxons and Normans were strongly attached to the sports of the field. Like the ancient Britons, they were fond of hunting; it was considered a necessary part of the education of every man of rank. Games, and exercises of strength and agility, were common among the Anglo-Saxons. Of their diversions we may mention

* Smith.

sword and buckler play, various games with balls, and bob-apple. Backgammon and chess were known—at any rate, games very similar to them. Backgammon is said to have been invented in the tenth century. The *Quintain* was a military exercise: a staff was fixed in the ground, and therefrom hung a shield, at which the player on horseback rode full tilt, endeavouring to strike it with his lance. Sometimes the Quintain was so made that, if the horseman failed in striking it in the right place, he received a severe blow on his pate for his non-success.

The sport of hawking, or the art of training and flying of hawks for the purpose of catching other birds, is a very old one. In the middle ages it was in high favour, and was practised by ladies and men of the highest rank. Such folk rarely appeared without their hawks; sometimes they even carried them into battle. In the Bayeux tapestry, Harold is represented with his hounds by his side, and a hawk in his hand, when brought before William of Normandy. Among the wealthy of this period, such a mode of travelling was common. Hawks were considered as the symbols of nobility; and a man who gave up his hawk was regarded as disgraced and dishonoured. They were trained and tended with the greatest care. To prevent them from seeing, their heads were covered with a little cap fastened behind with a strap, and adorned with a plume; the falcons of princes and great powerful men were known by these plumes being of the feathers of the bird of paradise. Thus armed, the birds were carried to the chase in a cage, and when it rained were covered with umbrellas. Of course it was not an easy thing to train a falcon; in the first place, it

had to be taught to know its master, then to become familiar with the noises of dogs and men; and then, to prevent the risk of its flying away, it was trained by means of a lure, which was an imitation of a bird. On the lure was placed a small piece of warm flesh of fowl, and the falcon was taught to come and eat at the bidding of the falconer. A cord was attached to the bird's leg, and the person holding the cord retired a short distance, while another lifted the bird's cap and set it at liberty. What we have said on this subject is taken from the "*Livre du Roy Modus*," the first work on the subject, we believe.

The marriage ceremonies of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes, and other particulars connected therewith, were curious. The day before the wedding day, all the relations and friends of the bridegroom, having been invited, arrived at his house, and spent the time in merriment, and in preparing for the important ceremony. Next morning, the bridegroom's company mounted on horseback completely armed, and then proceeded in great order to conduct the bride safely to the house of her future husband. After the nuptial benediction was given, the bride and bridegroom were crowned by the priest with crowns made of flowers. The wedding dresses of the bride and three of her maidens—of the bridegroom and three of his attendants—were of a peculiar colour and shape, and could not be used on any other occasion. When night came, the newly-married couple were conducted to and placed on the hymenean couch, where they drank of the marriage cup with all who were present. On the following morning, before the two arose, the company assembled in the bedroom to hear the husband declare the *morning gift;* in other

Hawking.

words, what settlement and indulgences he would allow his wife. When the gift was declared, a sufficient number of his relations undertook to see that he would perform what he promised. Feasting and rejoicing continued for several days; indeed, they seldom ended till all their provisions were consumed.

The laws of matrimony were observed with great strictness. Examples of adultery were very rare; and who can wonder? The husband of the adulteress cut off her hair in presence of her relatives—stripped her almost naked—turned her out of his house, and whipped her from one end of the village to the other! Any woman thus exposed never recovered her character; and neither youth, beauty, nor riches, could procure her another husband.*

Women of all ranks generally nursed their own children. It was not always so, however, else the following severe remark, quoted by Adams, would not have been called for:—"A certain wicked custom hath arisen among married people, that some ladies refuse to nurse the children whom they brought forth, but deliver them to be nursed."

The Anglo-Saxons were a superstitious people, and were often engaged in foretelling future events. The means they employed were very simple. Bits of wood cut from a fruit-bearing tree, and distinguished by different marks, were jumbled together in a white cloth. When the ceremony was *pro bono publico*, a priest asked God's aid, lifted up his eyes towards heaven, took up a slip three times successively, and then, counting the number of notches or marks upon it, foretold either good or evil accordingly. If the ceremony was a

* Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, Book II., ch. 8.

private one, the father of the family acted instead of the priest. They had other means of prognostication, such as the singing and flight of birds, and the neighing of horses, particularly those of a *white colour*. White horses they thought were the gods' ministers, and on that account all those of a white colour were kept in woods and groves, at the expense of the public.

The Saxons had no covered temples for some time after they came to this country. Before the arrival of Augustine, however, they had some fine ones. The sacred fire therein was never extinguished, and near it stood a vessel for receiving the blood of victims—also a brush to sprinkle it upon the audience. *Yule*, corresponding to our Christmas, was one of their greatest festivals. Before the introduction of Christianity, they had many gods. The days of the week were so called from the principal gods they worshipped. On the first day of the week they worshipped the sun; hence the day on which they worshipped it was called *the sun's day*, or Sunday. On Monday they worshipped the *Moon*—on Tuesday, *Tuisco*—on Wednesday, *Woden*—on Thursday, *Thor*—on Friday, *Friga*—and on Saturday, *Seater*. Saxon and Danish priests believed in and taught the immortality of the soul, and that after death the good would be rewarded and the bad punished. *Valhalla* was the name of the place where heroes and brave and good men went after death; wherein they spent the day in martial sports, and the night in merriment and feasting, eating the flesh of the boar, and drinking beer or mead out of the skulls of their enemies whom they had slain in battle. The skulls were presented to them by young virgins, who waited upon them at table. The

place to which all cowards and bad men went after death, they called *Niflcheim*, or the Abode of Evil; where Hela dwelt, whose palace was *anguish*, her table *famine*, and her bed *leanness*. At the end of this world the heavens, the earth, and the gods themselves, were to be consumed by fire; from the ashes of this world was to arise another far more glorious—good, just, and brave men were to be admitted into a palace of shining gold, and cowards, adulterers, assassins, &c., were to be confined in a place built of the dead bodies of serpents. Such was the creed of the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Danes whilst they were pagans.

We have said before that Gregory the Great regretted to hear that the English knew nothing of the Great Teacher and his teachings. Hence, when he became pope, he did what he could for the good of the "fair Saxons." He sent Augustine and forty other monks into England: King Ethelbert gave them an audience, and, having heard what they had to say, very wisely said that he could not, without further consideration, abandon the religion of his forefathers; but, as they had come a long way on a friendly visit, he allotted them a residence at Canterbury, and gave them full permission to exercise their influence on his subjects. The result was, that the king and many of his subjects were converted, and on Christmas-day many—some say ten thousand—were baptized. This important event occurred A.D. 596. Ethelbert gave up his own palace to the Roman missionaries, and where Canterbury cathedral now stands they built a church.

With respect to the Anglo-Saxon form of government, the knowledge which has been handed down to us is very limited. We suppose that the govern-

ment of the different states varied, and that it was changed from time to time during the six centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule. It appears, however, that at all times and in all the seven kingdoms, there was a national council called *Wittenagemot*, an assembly of wise men. The consent of this council was necessary before any law could be passed; in a word, before any thing of importance could be done. It consisted of the nobility, the wealthy landowners, and the dignified clergy.

The criminal laws of the Anglo-Saxons were extremely mild; very seldom was a man put to death, even for the worst crimes. The unruly were punished with fines, servitude, branding, or the loss of some member, such as an ear, finger, hand. In the reign of Edmund the Magnificent, England was infested with robbers, to prevent which Edmund made a law that, whenever a gang of robbers was caught, the oldest man amongst them should be hanged. This is said to be the first law, relative to hanging, which the Anglo-Saxons made. The price of all kinds of wounds was fixed by the Saxon laws. A wound an inch long under the hair was valued at one shilling, one of the same size in the face two shillings, thirty shillings for the loss of an ear, and so forth. The price of a limb was not the same throughout the country. In one county it might be valued at £3, in another at only £2. By the laws of Ethelbert, any man who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay a fine, and buy him another wife.

When the judges could not either condemn or acquit a prisoner, they had recourse to an *ordeal*, which was considered an appeal to heaven. The prisoner either walked barefooted and blindfolded

over nine hot ploughshares, placed a certain distance from each other, took redhot iron in one of his hands, thrust his arm into boiling water, or was thrown into a river, having his feet and hands tied. In the second and third modes of ascertaining whether a man was guilty, the water and iron were consecrated with many masses, prayers, &c. This being done, the man accused either took up with naked hand and arm a stone from a vessel filled with hot water, or carried a piece of hot iron a certain distance. Then his hand was wrapped up, and the covering sealed for the next three days, at the expiration of which the cloth was taken off, and, if no marks of burning or scalding were to be seen, he was considered innocent, but he was declared guilty if any burn or scald appeared.

There could be no greater impositions on the credulity of mankind than those fiery ordeals. The ceremony was performed by a *priest*, in whose charge the prisoner was for three days before the trial. All persons were excluded from the church till the iron was heated. Of course this gave the prisoner every opportunity to make it "all right" with the priest; and in brief, it always so happened that, if he had made it "all right" with the priest, he was pronounced *innocent*, but, if he had not done so, he afterwards had reason to regret it. No friend of the church or priests ever suffered—an enemy or opponent invariably did.

"The highest officer in the courts of the Anglo-Saxon kings was the mayor of the palace, always a prince of the royal family. The priest of the household was the next in dignity, who sat at the royal table to bless the meat, and to chaunt the Lord's prayer. The third in rank was the steward, who had a variety of perquisites, of which the

following were the most remarkable. 'As much of every cask of plain ale shall belong to the steward of the household as he can reach with his middle finger dipped into it, and as much of every cask of ale with spiceries as he can reach with the second joint of his middle finger, and as much of every cask of mead as he can reach with the first joint of the same finger.' There was also a judge of the household, who settled all disputes that arose among the servants of the royal family. A learned education and a *long beard* were indispensable qualifications of this great officer. The silentiary was an officer whose duty it was to command silence in the hall when the king sat down to table. He then took his stand near one of the pillars, and, when any improper noise arose, he immediately quashed it by striking the pillar with his rod. But the most remarkable of all was the king's feet-bearer. This was a young gentleman, whose duty it was to sit on the floor, with his back towards the fire, and hold the king's feet in his bosom while he sat at table, to keep them warm and comfortable; a piece of state and luxury unknown in modern times." *

The coins of the English, during the period under consideration, were *mancuses*, *shillings*, *pennies*, *halflings*, and *feorthlings*. The mancus was a gold coin, equal to seven shillings of our present money—the shilling was a silver coin, equal to elevenpence three farthings—the penny was likewise a silver coin, equal to threepence—so were the haflings and feorthlings, the former worth about three-halfpence, and the latter worth about three farthings, of our money. They had a brass coin, the value of which was half a farthing of their money; of ours, a farthing and a half,

* Adams—New History of Great Britain, p. 58.

The brass coins were called *stycas*. Their pound was unlike ours; it weighed about twelve ounces troy.

If we may judge from the use the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Danes made of the warm-water bath, they were certainly lovers of cleanliness. The warm bath was considered one of the necessaries of life. A common penance, enjoined by the canons of the church, to such as had been guilty of enormous sins, was to abstain from bathing in *warm* water, and to bathe in *cold* water, to which they had a great dislike. When a man had committed a very great sin, he had not only to abstain from the warm bath, but had to give his food, drink, clothes, bed, fire, and bath, to a certain number of poor people.

Few improvements in the arts were made by the Anglo-Saxons. Blacksmiths were highly respected in those times, because they made offensive and defensive arms and armour. Nearly every military officer had a smith, who went about with him to keep his arms and armour in good condition. Masonry was restored, and some other arts connected with it introduced into England, towards the end of the seventh century, by Milfrid and Benedict Biscop, two clergymen travellers. Bede says:—"In the year 674, Benedict crossed the sea, and brought with him a number of masons, in order to build the church of his monastery of stone, after the Roman manner, of which he was a great admirer. When the work was far advanced, he sent agents into France to procure glass-makers, to glaze the windows of his church and monastery, who not only performed the work required by Benedict, but instructed the English in the art of making glass for windows, lamps,

drinking-vessels, and other uses." As was said in the first chapter of this work, the ancient Britons were acquainted with the art of making glass, but the Saxons had seldom or never practised it till the seventh century. During this period our forefathers were acquainted with the arts of working in gold, silver, iron, lead, and jewels. St. Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, was the best blacksmith, brazier, goldsmith, and engraver of his time. From what Pennant says, we conclude that he could play the Æolian harp:—

> "St. Dunstan's harp, on the church wall,
> Upon a pin did hang:
> The harp itself, with strings and all,
> Untouch'd by hand did twang."

The Anglo-Saxon husbandmen had but a very imperfect knowledge of farming. The plough was very lightly made, and had only one handle. Horses were not then used for field labour—oxen were employed, and in some parts of England they are still used. The author of the Black Book, which is now in the Exchequer, says—"In ancient times our kings received neither gold nor silver from their tenants, but only provisions for the daily use of their household. This custom continued even after the Conquest, during the whole reign of William I., and I myself have conversed with several old people who had seen the royal tenants paying their rents in several kinds of provisions at the king's court." By the laws of Ina, king of the West Saxons, the following rent was to be paid for a farm consisting of ten hides of land—namely, ten casks of honey, three hundred loaves of bread, twelve casks of strong ale, thirty casks of small ale, two oxen, ten wethers, ten geese, twenty hens, ten cheeses, one cask of butter,

five salmon, and one hundred eels. In some places the rents were paid in wheat, rye, oats, malt, flour, hogs, and sheep, according to the nature of the farm, or the custom of the country.*

The principal exports were tin, lead, hides, horses, and *slaves*. The Anglo-Saxons are accused of making merchandize even of their nearest relations—a custom, says an historian who lived after the Norman Conquest, "which prevails in Northumberland, even in our own days."

Spices were a great luxury, and came from India through Italy. We read that four ounces of cinnamon were sent from one church dignitary to another as a great present.

After Ina, an Anglo-Saxon king, had given up the crown, he retired to Rome, where he built an English college, and for its support levied a tax of one penny upon every family in England. The money thus collected was called Peter's pence, because it was collected every year on St. Peter's day, and considerably exceeded the income of the kings of England in the thirteenth century. Henry VIII. stopped the payment of it.

Ethelred, who lived in the ninth century, created his brother Alfred an *earl*, which is the first mention of that title in history. *Comes* in Latin, *alderman* in Saxon, and *earl* in Dano-Saxon, were synonymous.

People in those times entered into societies for mutual support and protection; and, amongst other things, to prevent their giving abusive language to each other. The fine for using abusive language was a measure of honey.

Candles have probably been in use from a period of high antiquity. We know that they

* Adams—Hist. of Great Britain, Book II. Ch. 6.

were in use in the ninth century. The Anglo-Saxon word for candlestick—*candel sticca*—seems to denote that the earlier candlesticks were made of wood. In this period the candle was not placed in a socket as at present, but fixed on a long spike.

Some of the Anglo-Saxons were remarkable for their longevity. When Turketul became abbot of Croyland monastery, he found there three aged monks. The eldest died in the 168th year of his age, and was the oldest Englishman we ever heard of, except the famous Henry Jenkins, who was born in May, 1500, and died in December, 1670—Jenkins lived upwards of 169 years, seventeen years longer than old Parr.

Athelstan caused the Bible to be translated into the Saxon language, and one to be placed in every church. To encourage commerce, he ordered that every merchant who had made three voyages should be made a thane.

To get rid of the Danes, Ethelred II., surnamed the Unready, agreed to pay them the sum of £30,000, levied by way of tax and called *Dane-geld*, Dane-money, which was the first land-tax in England. The money was raised by levying a tax of one shilling on every hide of land. A hide of land was perhaps such a quantity of land as might be ploughed with one plough in a year. Bede reckons it as much as would maintain a family. Some say it was a hundred acres; others that it contained no certain number of acres. The division of England into hides of land is very ancient, mention being made of it in the laws of Ina.

Edward the Confessor pretended to cure, by his touch, persons who had the jaundice: this was called "touching for the king's evil."

In the time of Charles II., the practice of touching as a cure for the king's evil was at its height; in the first four years after his restoration, he "touched" nearly 24,000 persons. Dr Johnson, when a boy, was taken by his father from Lichfield to London, to be touched for the evil by Queen Anne, in 1712. The words, "I touch, but God healeth," were invariably pronounced by the sovereign when he administered "the sovereign salve," as Bulwer calls it. We also read of vervain root and baked toads being worn in silken bags around the neck, as charms for the evil!

With respect to the origin of *wakes*, Timbs says —The festival of the day on which the church of any parish was dedicated, is specially enjoined in the law of Edward the Confessor; and from this festival originated the wakes of more modern times—a name derived either from the verb *weiken*, to consecrate, or, as seems more probable, from the Saxon word for the vigil by which the festival was preceded. The institution of these festivals is to be traced to Gregory the Great, who advised Mellito, whom he had sent as abbot into Britain, to encourage the people to hold festivals around the churches on the days of their consecration, or of the commemoration of the martyrs whose relics were placed there, that he might prevent them from attending their idol feasts.

Formerly there were many wolves in this country, and one of the most remarkable incidents in the reign of Edgar, was the extirpation of them. The king effected this by hunting them himself; also by changing the tribute-money, usually paid by the Welsh princes, into an annual tribute of three hundred wolves' heads. An interesting tale on this subject may be found in the first volume of

Agnes Strickland's "Tales and Stories from History."

Where Westminster Abbey now stands, there used to be a heathen temple dedicated to Apollo. Sebert, king of Essex, pulled it down and built a church in its place, which he called St. Peter's. He also pulled down another pagan temple dedicated to Diana, and built a cathedral, which he called St. Paul's. The university of Cambridge was founded by him, A.D. 644.

The famous king Arthur was born in Cornwall. He was chosen king of Britain—often defeated the Saxons—established an order of knighthood called "The Knights of the Round Table"—proved himself a brave warrior—was beloved by the people—and died in the year 542 at the age of ninety.

The names which the Anglo-Saxons gave to the months of the year, are, like most other Saxon words and names, very expressive.

January was by the heathen Saxons called "wolf month," because the wolves were then most ravenous. It was also called "Aefter-Yula," or After-Christmas.

February they called the "Cake-month," in allusion to the cakes which in this month they were in the habit of offering to their gods. The well-known custom of making pancakes on Shrove-Tuesday is a remnant of the old superstition, and certainly one of the most pleasing that has come down to us.

March was dedicated to the goddess Rhoeda, and hence called "Rhed-monath." "Illyd-monath," the stormy month, was another name by which it was known. After the introduction of the teach-

ings of Jesus, March was held in great reverence, as the month in which Lent began.

April was the month of the goddess Eustre.

May was called "Trimilki," because then they began to milk the kine three times in the day. May-day was the great rural festival of the Anglo-Saxons, and was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing. This festival will soon be numbered with the things that were, though the May-pole with some ceremonies is still retained in many of our villages. In former times, on May-day morning the priests and people went in search of poles, and when they had got them, they adorned and brought them to their respective villages, after which they placed them in the ground, where they remained nearly the whole year, and were resorted to at all times of festivity. The last May-pole in London was taken down in 1717. John Stow says:—"On May-day morning every man except impediment, would walk into the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind." Henry VIII. rode a-maying with his queen Katherine.

June, it appears, was sometimes called "Weyd-monath," because then the cattle began to weyd, wade, through the meadows, which at that time were usually marshes. It was also called "Mid-summer month." This was the month in which the Saxons commenced their long voyages.

July was called "Hen-monath," or foliage month. "Hey-monath," hay month, was another name by which it was known.

August was called "Arn-monath," or "Barn-monath," meaning harvest month.

September was called "Gerst-monath," barley month; so named from the liquor called "beer-legh," made in that month, and hence barley.

October was called the "Cold-monath," or "Wyn-monath"—wine month. The vine was extensively cultivated in England at the time of the Saxons.

November was called "Blod-monath," blood month; as great numbers of cattle were then killed, either for winter stores, or as sacrifices to their deities. It was a custom to light great fires in the open air in honour of the gods, and as a means of driving away evil spirits.

December was called "Fust-monath," also "Winter monath;" after the introduction of Christianity it was called "Helig-monath," holy month. There was more festivity in this month than in any other. Previous to the year 597, Christmas was the feast of Thor.

Literature was little thought of by the Saxons and Danes. The only books they had were a few manuscripts, skins, &c., written upon and preserved by the monks. The monasteries were the schools of the middle ages, in which all "secular knowledge," as well as religious doctrine, was cultivated. Previous to the invention of printing, books were transcribed with great pains and labour, and some of them were beautifully *illuminated* and adorned. In uncivilized countries the priesthood is generally the best informed; but many of the Saxon clergy could neither read nor write their names. This was true of the English priesthood till after the invention of printing. It is not uncommon to find in the deeds of a synod a sentence like this—"As my lord bishop cannot write himself, at his request I have subscribed."

Even Charlemagne—the man of renown, the theme of minstrels, and the hero of romance—could not write his name till he was forty-five years of age. When the Romans were here they instructed the Britons; but the Saxons and Danes acted a very different part. Most of the books left here by the Romans, were served as the foolish Arabs served the valuable library of Alexandria—destroyed. Alfred the Great said—"At my accession to the throne, all knowledge and learning were extinguished in the English nation; insomuch that there were very few to the south of the Humber who understood the common prayers of the church, or were capable of translating a single sentence of Latin into English; but, to the south of the Thames, I cannot recollect so much as one who could do this." So dear were books in Alfred's time, that we read he gave an estate of eight hides of land for a single volume on cosmography. There were, however, a few scholars in those wretched times, the chief of whom were *Gildas the Wise*, the only British historian of the sixth century whose works have come down to us; *Columbanus*, a native of Scotland, a monk, a writer, and the contemporary of Gildas; *Bede*, author of an ecclesiastical history and other works; —*Aldhelm*, and *Alfred the Great*. Columbanus founded an abbey in France, and made some monastic laws, which were so severe, that if any one of the monks smiled during "divine service," he was to receive fifty lashes with a whip. King Alfred, being a good scholar for those ages, and a true patriot, encouraged literature—founded some schools at Oxford—divided all England into shires, hundreds, and tithings—created the English navy —established trial by jury, and made some good

laws, &c. &c. His laws were very mild; but the strictness wherewith he caused them to be observed somewhat counterbalanced their lenity. It is said his police force was so good, that when golden bracelets were hung up near the highway, no one durst touch them. We have our doubts about this. With unjust judges Alfred was very severe; forty-five were executed for corruption in the space of one year. He divided England into counties or shires—from the Saxon word *scyre*, to divide; these again into hundreds, which were subdivided into tithings, to which the inhabitants were obliged to belong, under pain of being treated as vagabonds. Alfred's object in doing this was to prevent vagrancy and crime. Ten neighbouring houses made a tithing, and ten tithings made a hundred. In every tithing there was a magistrate, who was responsible for the conduct of the ten houses.

Whilst Alfred lay concealed in the isle of Athelney, he made a vow that, if he should be restored to his kingdom, he would dedicate one-third of his time to God. True to his word, he allotted eight hours every day to acts of devotion—eight hours to public affairs—and the remaining eight out of the twenty-four to sleep, study, and necessary refreshment. He measured his time by means of wax candles marked with circular lines of different colours, which served as so many hour lines. To prevent the wind from making his candles burn unsteadily, he invented lanterns, in which he placed his candles. In his will there is the following remarkable and manly sentiment—"It is just the English should for ever remain as free as their own thoughts." We might say much more about the

greatest and most useful king the English ever had, but this is not the place.

The Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic language is so ancient that we never heard of any one tracing it to its origin. Some men have discovered a remarkable affinity between it and the Greek, both in radical words and in general structure. One thing is certain—namely, that the resemblance between the Anglo-Saxon and the English of our day is so great, that most of the Saxon words are now in use, though many of them are greatly altered in spelling and meaning.

We know little of the true condition of the people at this period. This we do know, however, that the condition of the people—the workers, the tillers of the soil, and the artisans—was most deplorable. The majority of them were absolute slaves, the rest in a state of bondage equally oppressive. Their owners could whip, or scourge, or put them in irons. From the following passage it appears that they might be yoked together as cattle—"Let every man know his team of men, of horses, and oxen." * Cattle and men were the measure of value, and came under the denomination of live money, and were the medium of exchange in which the prices of commodities were estimated." †

* Sharon Turner—Hist. of Eng. Vol. III., p. 91.
† Wade—Hist. of the Middle and Working Classes, p. 6.

CHAPTER III.

Manners and Customs, &c., of the English from the Norman Conquest in 1066 to 1216—during the Reigns of the Conqueror, William II., Henry I., Stephen, Henry II., Richard I., and John.

EVERY fresh invasion has added new elements of manners, customs, habits, &c.; hence for this and other reasons the Norman Conquest was an important epoch in the history of the British people. The Normans or Northmen were originally of the same Scandinavian stock as the Saxons and Danes. Their manners were any thing but what is now termed *polite*. There is an anecdote told of Duke Rollo of Normandy, and Charles the Simple of France, which gives us a good idea of the Normans' manners. In the year 912, Rollo and Charles had an interview, at which Rollo agreed to be the king's vassal for some favours which the king granted him. When Rollo was about to retire, some one told him that he ought to kiss the king's foot in token of vassalage. "Kiss a man's foot!" replied Rollo with astonishment. Being told that it was a necessary and customary ceremony, the Norwegian beckoned to one of his soldiers, and bade him kiss the king's foot in his stead. The soldier, laying hold of the king's leg, raised the foot to his mouth, and the king was thrown on his back, amid peals of laughter from Rollo's soldiers! The Normans were brave and generous, but they were also haughty, proud, passionate, and lewd. To the wives and daughters of the English they were very rude. They were utterly

regardless of that respect and decency with which the fair sex ought to have been treated, and with which they were treated by the ancient Britons and the Anglo-Saxons. Their licentiousness was so great that the princess Matilda, daughter of Malcolm Canmore, king of Scotland, and afterwards queen of Henry I., being educated in this country, was obliged to wear the veil of a nun to preserve her honour from being violated by them.

The introduction of *chivalry* into this country by the Normans caused a radical change in the education, &c., of the wealthy. It recognized nothing higher or nobler than the condition of a knight. "The institution of chivalry had for its object the cultivation of those virtues which may be classed under the word *manhood*, in its best and widest sense. The true knight was supposed to be pious, truthful, and brave; a generous friend, a gallant warrior, a devoted lover. It was necessary for him to add great strength of body, and skill in all manly exercises, to gentleness of manners and culture of mind. Terrible in battle, it was his duty to wield the sword of justice, to strike down the oppressor and the tyrant; but to help the weak, and give his life, if need be, in the cause of the innocent.

The youth who aspired to knighthood began his career as a page in some noble house, where, under the gentle influence of women, he was taught various accomplishments, and imbued with that beautiful though fantastic dream of honour which he hoped to realize in his future life.

At the age of fourteen the page became an esquire, and was permitted to wear a sword. He now began a regular course of training for arms, and usually sought to attach himself to some

knight of fame, whom he attended in hall or field, and supported in battle. The young aspirant was admitted to the honours of knighthood at the age of twenty-one, unless he had previously won his spurs by some gallant feat of arms. This honour was of rare occurrence, as, by the laws of chivalry, the duties of esquire were limited to attendance upon his lord, and he was permitted few opportunities of personal distinction.

The original spirit of chivalry was essentially religious. The initiation into the order of knighthood was a religious ceremony, and usually took place on one of the feasts of the church, as Easter-day, the day of Pentecost, or Christmas day. The aspirant prepared himself for his new dignity by long vigils, fasts, and prayer; and on the night before the ceremony took place he repaired alone to the church, where he passed the hours in watching beside his armour.

On the day appointed, high mass was performed in the presence of the nobles and bishops and an assembly of the people; and, after the sword of the novice had been consecrated to the service of heaven, he took a solemn vow, according to the laws of chivalry, "to speak the truth, to succour the helpless and oppressed, and never to turn back from an enemy."

The bishop then dubbed him a knight, and the other knights, and often the ladies present, advanced and armed the youth. The spurs were usually buckled on first, and thus came to be regarded as the symbol of knighthood. Such was the form by which a young man was admitted to the highest dignity of chivalry.* More courtesy of demeanour, and a removal of some of the harsh

*Smith—Pic. Hist. of Eng., p. 116.

features of the feudal system, were the effects of its introduction.

One of our earliest and sweetest bards thus speaks of chivalry—

> "A goodly usage of those antique times,
> In which the sword was servant unto right,
> When, not for malice and contentious crimes,
> But all for praise, and proof of manly might,
> The martial brood accustomed to fight;
> Then honour was the meed of victory,
> And yet the vanquished had no despite."—SPENCER.

Of course chivalry, like most other things, has its dark side as well as its bright one—Spencer speaks of the bright side, for he was a poet. Much of its charms, however, is dispelled when examined by the student of history. It included a strange combination of religious sentiments, moral ideas, warlike and impious habits, romantic gallantry, and unmanliness. A knight's favourite saying was, "God and the ladies;" in theory, no doubt the first place would be assigned to the Deity, but in fact it was commonly given to the ladies. It made no provision whatever for the culture of the mind—mere polite accomplishments were only aimed at. The highest eulogium which could be pronounced on a knight was—"No one better understood to break a lance and to kiss a lady." For further information, see the article *Chivalry*, in the supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, written by Sir Walter Scott; also the article *Chevalerie*, in the Encyclopédie Moderne; the preface to Lord Byron's Childe Harold, and Don Quixote.

The best pictorial authority for the habits of our Norman ancestors, at the time of their conquest of England, is the *Bayeux Tapestry*. This curious relic, this remarkable monument of skill and in-

dustry, originally formed one piece, and, according to a recent writer,* measures two hundred and twenty-seven feet in length, by about twenty inches in breadth. The groundwork of it is a strip of rather fine linen cloth, which through age has assumed the tinge of brown holland. Planché says it is rudely worked in coloured worsteds, like a *sampler*. It is generally supposed to have been the work of Matilda, wife of the Conqueror. It opens with the mission of Harold to Duke William, and terminates with the battle of Hastings. At the present time the tapestry is preserved in the library of the town of Bayeux in Normandy, and is exposed to view in glass cases. It is fully entitled to our confidence as a faithful representation of the habits, armour, and weapons of William and his followers.†

During the reign of Edward the Confessor, the Saxons affected the fashions of the Norman-French; hence, at the time of the Conquest, there was not a great difference between the costume of the Saxons and that of their invaders. The Saxons, Danes, and Normans, being offsets of the same great barbaric stock, there existed a sort of family resemblance between them; but, through the Normans establishing themselves in France in the tenth century, they materially improved their character and manners. Whilst the Anglo-Saxons sank into a slothful and unwarlike people, and the Danes continued pirates, "the Normans became distinguished throughout Europe for their military skill, their love of glory, their encouragement of literature, the splendour and proprietary of their

*Rev. J. C. Bruce—"The Bayeux Tapestry Elucidated."
†Planché—p. 70 of Hist. of Brit. Costume.

habiliments, the cleanliness of their persons, and the courtesy of their demeanour."

The degenerate and sensual Saxons imitated the fashions of their neighbours, but were incapable of copying their virtues; and we therefore find the general civil costume of the Normans consisting, like the Anglo-Saxon, of the short tunic, the cloak, the drawers, with long stockings or pantaloons with feet to them, called by the Normans *chaussés.** Shoes and bandages were worn as the Saxons had worn them. Towards the end of the Bastard's reign, short boots were common, and a flat round cap, like a Scotch bonnet, and another, which appears little more than a coif, are the general head coverings of unarmed persons.

The Norman-French not only shaved their faces *entirely*, in contradistinction to the Anglo-Saxons, who left, at any rate, the upper lip unshorn; but, before the time of the Conquest, had adopted the Aquitanian fashion of shaving the back of their heads also. This was the cause of the spies of Harold reporting that they had seen no soldiers, but an army of priests.† Wace, author of "Roman de Rou," a poem on Rollo or Rou, and the other Dukes of Normandy, in speaking of the Normans, says that they were all shaven and shorn, "*tout rez et tondu.*" In the Bayeux tapestry they are distinguished by the backs of their heads being closely shaven, so that they really have a monkish appearance. The Saxons are represented with hair as usually worn, and mustaches, as described by William of Malmsbury, and a few with beards.‡ Although the rage for cropping and shaving was

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, pp. 70, 71.
† William of Malmsbury—Lib. III. p. 56.
‡ See Turner's England, Book VIII. c. 3, note.

great, the old fashion of wearing the hair long and flowing, was never altogether abandoned. A few had always the good sense not to make themselves look unnatural and ridiculous. Indeed the silly custom of shaving the face and the back of the head was abandoned altogether soon after their settlement in England, and, with the usual caprice of fashion, the Anglo-Normans appear to have run into the opposite extreme.

"In 1104, when Henry I. was in Normandy, a prelate named Serlo preached so eloquently against the fashion of wearing long hair that the monarch and his courtiers were moved to tears; and, taking advantage of the impression he had produced, the enthusiastic prelate whipped a pair of scissors out of his sleeves, and cropped the whole congregation!"

This was followed up by a royal edict prohibiting the wearing of long hair; but in the next reign, that of Stephen, the old fashion was revived, when in 1139 it received a sudden check from an exceedingly trifling circumstance. A young soldier, whose chief pride lay in the beauty of his locks, which hung down almost to his knees, dreamed one night that a person came to him and strangled him with his own luxuriant ringlets. This dream had such an effect upon him that he forthwith trimmed them to a rational length. His companions followed his example, and, superstition spreading the alarm, cropping became again the order of the day. But this reformation, adds the historian, was of very short duration: scarcely had a year elapsed before the people returned to their former follies, and such especially as would be thought courtiers permitted their hair to grow to such a shameful length, that they resembled women rather than

men; those whom nature had denied abundance of hair supplying the deficiency by artificial means. Wigs therefore may date in England from the time of Stephen. . . . . The fashion of wearing long beards reappeared during the reign of Henry I., and was equally reprobated by the clergy. Both Serlo in his sermon, and Odericus Vitalis in his Ecclesiastical History, compare the men of their day to "filthy goats!" *

We read that the Normans and Flemings who came with the Conqueror into England, as well as the great numbers who came soon after, were remarkable for their ostentation and love of finery. Personal decoration was their chief study, and perhaps as many new fashions were then introduced as in our own time.†

In the reign of Rufus the clergy and laity became alike infected with the love of extravagant and costly clothing. The short tunic was lengthened and worn fuller, and the sleeves particularly so. The long tunic worn on state occasions, and the linen vestment worn beneath it, positively trailed upon the ground. The sleeves were also of length and breadth sufficient to cover the whole hand.‡ That the rich wore gloves is proved from what is said of the Bishop of Durham's escape from the Tower in the reign of Henry I.—having "forgotten his gloves," he rubbed the skin off his hands to the bone in sliding down the rope from his window.§ The mantles were made of the finest cloth, and lined with rich furs;‖ one presented to Henry I., by Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln,

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, pp. 88, 89.
† Strutt's Dress and Habits.
‡ Planché—taken from the E. Hist. of Odericus Vitalis.
§ Odericus Vitalis, pp. 780 and 787.
‖ Ibid.

was lined with black sables with white spots, and cost £100.* With the shorter tunic a shorter cloak was worn lined with the most precious furs. Peaked-toed boots and shoes, of an absurd shape, excited the wrath and contempt of the monkish historians. Odericus Vitalis says they were invented by some one deformed in the feet. The peaked-toed boots, called *ocreæ rostratæ*, were strictly forbidden to the clergy. The shoes called *pigaciæ* had their points made like a scorpion's tail, and a courtier named Robert stuffed his out with tow, and caused them to curl round in form of a ram's horn, a fashion which took mightily amongst the nobles, and obtained for its originator the cognomen of Cornadu.†

During the reign of the second Henry the fashion of indenting the borders of tunics and mantles seems to have been introduced, as a statute was passed just before that monarch's death prohibiting certain classes the wearing of cut or jagged garments.‡ Stockings and *chaussés* were worn as usual. The hair in John's reign "was curled with crisping-irons, and bound with fillets or ribbons; and the beaux of the period continually went abroad without caps, that its beauty might be seen and admired."§

The dress of the poorer people continued to be a tunic with sleeves. Those pretty well off wore *chaussés* and shoes or short boots; and in bad weather, or when travelling, covered their heads and shoulders with a cloak or mantle, to which was attached a cowl, and called by the Normans *capa*.

The Anglo-Norman ladies were attired similarly

* Malmsbury, Lib. V. p. 98; Henry Huntingdon, p. 222.
† Planché.
‡ Gervase of Dover and John of Brompton, sub anno 1188.
§ Planché.

to the Anglo-Saxon. They wore the long tunic, and over it a garment answering to the Saxon *gunna* or gown, but which of course the Normans called *robe;* and the veil or headcloth, which in like manner they rendered *couvrechef*, from whence our word kerchief. The principal novelty is in the gown or *robe*, which was laced close to fit the figure, and had sleeves tight to the wrist, and then suddenly widening and falling to some depth. The borders of the dresses were of gold, and very broad. The hair, mostly covered, appears to have been long, and sometimes plaited in two or more divisions, after the Gothic fashion. From about the end of the eleventh century to the middle of the twelfth century, the rage for lengthening every part of the dress was not confined to the men. The sleeves of the tunics, and the veils or kerchiefs of the ladies, appear to have been so long in the reigns of Rufus and Henry I., as to be tied up in knots to avoid treading on them, and the trains or skirts of the garments lay in immense rolls at the feet.

Towards the end of this period a few alterations were made: the robe lost its extravagant cuffs, and the sleeves were made tight, and terminated at the wrist. A rich girdle loosely encircled the waist, and the queen of Richard I. is represented with a small pouch called an *aulmonière*. In form it resembles a modern reticule, and hung from the left side of the loose girdle. A garment called *bliaut* or *bliaus*, which probably was only another name for the surcoat or supertunic, is frequently mentioned as lined with fur for the winter. In this *bliauts* we may discover the modern French *blouse*, a tunic or smock-frock. *

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume.

The military costume of this period presents us with several novelties. The first is the capuchon or cowl, fastened to the tunic covered with rings. Over this was placed the conical helmet, with its nasal, and in some instances there was a neck-piece behind. Both Normans and Saxons are represented in the ringed tunic, which descends below the knee. Being cut up a little way before and behind for convenience in riding, it appears, from the rudeness of this representation, as though it terminated in short trousers. The Norman name for this military vestment was *Hauberk*, Latinized *Halbercum*, which is commonly derived from *Halsberg*, a protection for the throat.* The Normans' shields were nearly of the shape of a boy's kite, and are supposed to have been assumed by them in imitation of the Sicilians. They bear rude effigies of dragons, serpents, lions, crosses, rings, &c.

The Normans were good archers: to their arrows generally is attributed the issue of the battle of Hastings. Rufus is represented on his great seal in a scaly suit of steel or leather armour, with a new head-piece, called by the Normans a *chapelle-de-fer:* it was an iron cap of a very Tartar-like shape. In the reigns of Rufus and Henry I. the collar of the hauberk was drawn up over the chin and mouth, and fastened to the nasal, so that the eyes only were visible. Next were introduced steel cheek-pieces. The second seal of Henry I. represents him without a helmet, the cowl of mail being drawn over a steel cap called a *coif-de-fer*, in contradistinction to the *chapelle-de-fer* worn over the mail. In the reigns of Richard I. and

* *Vide* Meyrick's letter on the body armour anciently worn in this country. Archæologia, Vol. XIX. *Vide* "Critical Inquiry," by the same author.

John, some striking changes in the military dress were made. The shield was emblazoned with heraldic bearings, the long tunic was worn under, and the surcoat was worn over the coat of mail. The Crusades originated these changes. Their other arms comprised the long-bow, the cross-bow, the sword, the lance, the battle-axe, and the gisarme.

The Anglo-Normans introduced many elegancies and refinements in the habits of common life and customs of the table. It has been already stated that the Saxons were gross in appetite, and that they spent much of their time at feasts. The Normans were somewhat temperate in eating and drinking, &c., about the time they came to England. Amongst the dainties held in high esteem by them were the peacock and the crane. The boar's head was considered a regal dish, and at large feasts it was taken to the table in a kind of procession, preceded by musicians. They had only two meals a day, dinner and supper. *Nine* o'clock in the morning was their dinner-time, and *five* in the afternoon was their supper hour. Meals at these hours were thought to be conducive to health and long life. The following lines, which were by them often repeated, prove this—

"Lever a cinq, diner a neuf,
Souper a cinq, coucher a neuf,
Fait vivre dans nonante et neuf." *

The Anglo-Normans, however, were not so temperate after they had been in this country for some time; for we find that at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide the kings of England gave sump-

* To rise at five, to dine at nine,
To sup at five, to bed at nine,
Make a man live to ninety-nine.

tuous entertainments to their nobles and prelates. Those entertainments produced a taste for profuse and expensive living; and proud and wealthy barons aped in their castles that which they had seen in the palaces of kings. A writer who was present at one of these entertainments says that it lasted from three o'clock in the afternoon till midnight, and that delicacies were served up which had been brought from Constantinople, Babylon, Alexandria, Palestine, Syria, and Phenicia. These delicacies must have been very expensive; for Thomas à Becket gave £5, a sum equal to £75 of our money, for one dish of eels! The wealthy had some kinds of provisions at their tables which could not be found in the British isles now. "When Henry II. entertained his own court, the great officers of his army, with all the kings and great men of Ireland, in Dublin, at the festival of Christmas, the Irish princes and chieftains were quite astonished at the variety of dishes which they beheld, and were not easily prevailed upon to eat the flesh of cranes, a kind of food to which they had not been accustomed." * During the time of the Crusades, when many of the bishops and abbots went to Palestine, the priests and monks abandoned themselves to luxury, sloth, and the devil. Giraldus Cambrensis tells us that the monks and prior of St. Swithin one day threw themselves prostrate on the ground and in the mire before Henry II., complaining, with many tears and most doleful lamentations, that the bishop of Winchester, who was also their abbot, had cut off three dishes from their table. "How many has he left you?" said the king. "Ten only," replied the disconsolate monks. "I myself had never more than *three*,"

*Adams—New Hist. of Gt. Britain, p. 98.

said Henry, "and I enjoin your bishop to reduce you to the same number."

The most popular amusements in this period were hawking, hunting, and tournaments. The tournament was introduced into England in the reign of Stephen. "The martial sports, commonly called *tournaments*, were very favourite diversions in those ages. When a prince had resolved to hold a tournament, he sent heralds to the neighbouring courts and countries to publish his design, and to invite all brave and loyal knights to honour the intended solemnity with their presence. This invitation was accepted with the greatest joy, and a vast number of ladies and gentlemen commonly assembled. All the knights who proposed to enter the lists, hung up their shields in the cloister of a neighbouring monastery, where they were viewed by the ladies and knights. If a lady touched one of the shields, it was considered as an accusation of its owner, who was immediately brought before the judges of the tournament, tried with great solemnity, and, if found guilty of having defamed a lady, or of having done any thing unbecoming the character of a true and courteous knight, he was degraded, and expelled the assembly with every mark of infamy. The lists were surrounded with lofty towers and scaffolds of wood, in which the princes and princesses, ladies, lords, and knights, with the judges, marshals, heralds, and minstrels, were seated in their proper places, in their richest dresses. The combatants, nobly mounted and completely armed, were conducted into the lists by their respective mistresses, in whose honour they were to fight, with bands of martial music, amidst the acclamations of the numerous spectators. In these exercises represen-

tations were exhibited of all the different feats of actual war, from a single combat to a general action, with all the different kinds of arms, as spears, swords, battle-axes, and daggers. At the conclusion of every day's tournament the judges declared the victors, and distributed the prizes, which were presented to the happy knights by the noblest and most beautiful ladies in the assembly. The victors were then conducted in triumph to the palace; their armour was taken off by the ladies of the court; they were dressed in the richest robes, seated at the table of the sovereign, and treated with every possible mark of distinction. They became the greatest favourites of the fair, and the objects of universal admiration. The most magnificent tournament celebrated in this period, was that proclaimed by Henry II. of England, in the plains of Beaucaire, at which no fewer than 10,000 knights were present, besides ladies and other spectators." *

When companies of knights attacked each other, the encounter was called a *mêlée;* but generally two only engaged in combat. In the encounters persons were sometimes killed. Henry the Second's son Geoffrey was killed in a tournament at Paris.

Strutt describes some military sports as peculiar to the young men of London in the twelfth century. At this period, too, the same writer says that it was common for the young men and maidens of the city to meet for dancing and merrymaking after the labours of the day; that the city damsels played on citherns for the amusement of all present;

*Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain; pp. 96-7. See Mills's History of Chivalry, Ch. VI., on Tournaments and Jousts.

Wandering Minstrels.

and that the dancing was kept up by the light of the moon, "usque imminente lunâ."

Most of the arts and scenes then known were greatly improved, especially agriculture, sculpture, painting, and architecture. In the twelfth century great improvements were made in architecture, though the country people still lived in hovels. Glass windows were first used in private houses in the year 1180. In John's reign chimneys were invented; before his reign the smoke had to escape either through the doorway, or through a hole in the roof. As far as we can ascertain, the Normans introduced very few articles of furniture in the eleventh century. It is probable, however, that the improvement of taste and increased wealth were soon manifested in the application of the useful and decorative arts to the convenience of domestic life. An incident is related by an old writer, which presents a glimpse of the manners in the reign of Henry II. In winter time Becket's apartments were every day covered with clean straw or hay, and in summer with green boughs or rushes, lest the gentlemen who wanted to see him, but could not get a place at the table, should by sitting on the floor soil their clothes! Wealthy folk mostly lived in castles, which were huge, massive, prison-like buildings, enclosed with walls of immense thickness, and surrounded by a deep moat or ditch. Over the moat was a bridge, which could be drawn up or let down at pleasure. The castles were comfortless places to live in; the rooms were small, and the light was admitted into them through chinks or loopholes. The floors were covered with rushes; in the middle of many of the rooms stood a massy table, surrounded by coarse benches. The baron and his family lived in the

upper part of the castle, the retainers in the lower part. The dependants were crowded together, slept on straw, and had plenty to eat and drink. The tables were generally loaded three times a day, and, though the food was coarse, yet it was plentiful.

It was during the period under consideration, that *surnames* were introduced into England. Family names were so called because they were originally written *over* the Christian name—*sur* or *sursum* is the Latin word for *over*. Until the Norman Conquest, persons generally had only one name, as Edwin, Harold, Edward.

The names Robert, William, Richard, and Henry, were introduced by the Normans; and for a long time even these were used singly by poor people. Many took their surnames from events in their lives, or from something remarkable in their dress, manner, occupation, &c. &c. Let us take a few examples. William I. was called the *Conqueror*, from the fact of his having conquered England; sometimes he was called the *Bastard*, because he was illegitimate. He was the son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaise. William II. was surnamed *Rufus*, or the *Red*, from the colour of his hair. Henry I. was surnamed *Beauclerk*, because for those times he was a good scholar. Henry II. was surnamed *Curt*, or *Shortmantle*, because it is said that he introduced a mantle called the cloak of Anjou, which, being shorter than those worn in previous reigns, obtained for him the cognomen of *Court Manteau*. Henry II. was the first of the house of *Plantagenet*, or *Plantagenest*. The original name of his father was Martel, which was changed to Plantagenet, because his father used to wear on

his helmet a bunch of flowering broom—*plante-de genêt*—instead of a plume. Martel was the first earl of Anjou; in consequence of his having committed some great crime, he was enjoined to visit Palestine. Dressed as a pilgrim, he proceeded on his journey, and wore a piece of broom on his cap as a mark of humility, of which this plant was the symbol. In remembrance of his penance, he adopted the title of Plantagenest, and his descendants inherited the surname. Richard I. was surnamed *Cœur de Lion*, on account of his valour. John was surnamed *Sanstərre*, or *Lackland*, for this reason: all the sons of Henry II. had some dominion except John, and so the courtiers and others in ridicule called him *Sansterre*. Edward I. was called *Longshanks*, because he had long thin legs. Henry IV. was surnamed *Bolingbroke*, from his being born at a village of that name in Lincolnshire. Richard III. was surnamed *Crookback*, from his being deformed.

The wealthy had family names long before the people generally adopted them. That many of our surnames were taken from trades aud occupations, from the possession of lands, &c. &c., is well known, as Smith, Taylor, Miller, Fisher, Carpenter, Mason, French, &c. From the signs which tradesmen put up before their shops, are derived such names as King, Duke. Some names were consequently borrowed from trades, occupations, &c, which are now obsolete; hence the origin of such names has become obscure, as *Walker*, one that dressed cloth in the walkmiln—*Fletcher*, he who trimmed arrows by adding the feathers—*Arrowsmith*, one who made piles—*Bowyer*, he that made bows—*Falkner*, from falconer, one who trained hawks—*Forster*, or *Foster* comes from, forester—

Archer, Monk, Abbot, Grantham, Ely, Preston, and many others.

When Malcolm III., king of Scotland, invaded England, and reduced the castle of Alnwick, the besieged were obliged to surrender, and only requested that the king himself would receive the keys of the gates. The king consented, and the keys were brought by Robert de Mowbray upon the top of a spear, who, standing within the walls of the castle, pierced the lance through the king's eye as he was going to take them. For this exploit the governor received the surname of *Pierce-eye*, now changed to Percy, which is still the family name of the Duke of Northumberland.

The Puritans, about the time of Cromwell, among other objects of reformation which they laid down in their *discipline*, had this article—"Let not woman only offer children to baptism, but the father, if it may be convenient, or some other in his name. Let persuasion be used, that such names as do savour either of Paganism or Popery be not given to children, but principally those whereof there are examples in the Scriptures." But those scrupulous zealots were not content with the plain scriptural names of Abraham, Obadiah, Zachariah, Ruth, Rebecca, &c. They adopted phrases, and sometimes sentences, for the Christian names of their children, such as "The Lord is near"—"More-tryall"—"Reformation"—"Discipline"—"Joy-again"—"Sufficient"—"From above"—"Heavenly mind"—"Free-gifts"—"More fruit"—"Fight the good fight"—"Dust," &c. &c. One of the puritanical ministers was so bigoted in this respect, that he refused to christen a child because the father insisted on having his son called Richard!

On reference to the prices of various articles of absolute luxury, it may be perceived that the English at this period must have had no small amount of money. Rings of the value of one mark—£10 present money—seem to have been an ordinary article of dress. Silks and fine cloths were valued at sums varying from £3 the yard, present money. The price of spices was enormous. Cinnamon was two shillings and sixpence—£1, 17s. 6d. per lb. Ginger the same. Nutmegs ten shillings—£7, 10s.; mace the same price; while cloves were twenty shillings—£15, per lb.

"In reading accounts of the expense of living in past ages, its amount, at first sight, appears almost incredibly low; the reader, in few cases, rightly estimating the comparative value of money in the past and present times. Thus, the silver shilling in the twelfth century, and for some centuries afterwards, weighed three times as much as it now does; and, on account of the scarcity of money, the expense of living varied from one-fifth to one-eighth of what it does at the existing period. The real proportion is continually varying; but in order to avoid exaggeration, and to arrive at an even sum, $6\frac{2}{3}$ has been assumed as the general average, and this multiplied by three gives twenty; or, in other words, the value of a certain sum then was equal to twenty times as much as at the present day. From the increasing quantity of the circulating medium soon after this period, the difference in the expense of living decreased to the average of five; and therefore, and for some centuries to come, the multiplier will be fifteen instead of twenty." *

Little alteration was made by the Normans in

* Youatt on Sheep, p. 200.

the coins used by the Anglo-Saxons. During this period the silver penny is sometimes called an *esterling* or *sterling*. At the present time good money is sometimes called sterling. Antiquaries are not decided about the origin and meaning of the word sterling. It is probable that some artists from Germany, who were called Esterlings from the situation of their country, had been employed in fabricating our money, which chiefly consisted of silver pennies, and that from them the penny was called an esterling, and our money esterling or *sterling* money. Henry I. coined a great deal of silver. The most valuable silver coin was the mark, the value of which was 13s. 4d. There was no gold coin till the reign of Henry III., and no copper coin till the reign of James I.

William I. was not only the most warlike, but the most politic prince of his time. He knew power followed property, and for this reason took care to establish such institutions in the country as would retain the military authority of the kingdom in the hands of those who had assisted him to obtain possession of it. With this view *feudalism* was established in England. England was divided into 60,000 parts among his Norman barons, upon certain conditions, which were—that every baron who received a part, should supply the king when he went to war with a horse-soldier, fully armed, by which means he had 60,000 horse-soldiers free of all expense. The feudal system was not confined to the barons—they subdivided their large parts into smaller ones, which they let out to their dependants upon similar conditions. The bishops and abbots were also bound to furnish the king during war with a certain number of knights, in proportion to the extent of their possessions.

To make the people forget that they were Saxons, the Conqueror introduced the Norman dress, and tried to abolish the Saxon language. He caused all his laws to be written in Norman-French—seized all copies of the Scriptures written in Anglo-Saxon—forbad the clergy to perform service in Saxon—and established schools in which French and Latin were the only languages either taught or spoken.

Although William I. had sixty-eight royal forests and parks, he laid waste ninety square miles of land in Hampshire to make a forest for deer. If any Englishman shot even a stray deer, he was either put to death, or sentenced to lose one of his eyes or hands, or to receive some other similar punishment.

The Court of Chancery and the Court of Exchequer were established by the Bastard. The object of the Court of Chancery is to mitigate the law when it is too strict. In the Court of the Exchequer, all cases relating to the king's revenue are tried; it was so called because the clerks formerly used exchequer or check boards to assist them in their calculations, or from the *chequed* cloth resembling a *chess*-board which covers the table there; and because this court was originally established to call the king's debtors to account, the term check came to signify to examine into accounts. Check is derived from *echecs*, the French for a *chess*-board. The civil officers, the lord chief justice, and justices of the peace, were appointed by William I.

The same king commanded the Doomsday book to be written, which contains an account of all the estates, houses, lakes, rivers, and forests in England at that time; also the exact amount and nature of

each man's property, and the number of inhabitants thereon. This is considered the most valuable monument of antiquity possessed by any nation: it is still preserved in the Exchequer, and consists of two volumes in vellum.

In the latter part of the Conqueror's reign no Englishman was allowed to carry arms, or to have a light burning in his house after eight o'clock at night. That the people might know when to put out their fires and lights, a bell was tolled at eight o'clock every night. The bell was called the "Cur-few bell," from two French words *couvre* and *feu*, meaning cover the fire. The custom is still kept up in some parts of the country, and among others at Staveley, near Chesterfield, where a bell is tolled at eight o'clock every evening.

William I. built the tower of London, which was designed for state prisoners. It was first made a royal residence by Stephen, and was frequently used as such until the reign of James II. He also built Battle Abbey to commemorate the conquest—introduced beheading as a punishment—and, to prevent an invasion similar to his own, he fortified the five ports generally called the *cinque ports*. *Cinque* is the French word for five. The five ports were Dover, Hastings, Romney, Hythe, and Sandwich.

An old author, in speaking of the Bastard, quaintly says:—"He let his lands to fine as dear as he could: then came some other and bade more than the first had given, and the king let it to him who bid more: then came a third, and bid yet more, and the king let it into the hands of the man who bade the most. Nor did he reck how sinfully his reeves got money of poor men, or how many unlawful things they did: for the more men talked

of right law, the more they did against the law. * * * * He also set many deerfriths; and he made laws therewith, that whosoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind. As he forbade the slaying of harts, so also did he of boars. So much he loved the high deer, as if he had been their father. He also decreed about hares, that they should go free. His rich men moaned, and the poor men murmured; but he was so hard that he recked not the hatred of them all; for it was need they should follow the king's will withall, if they wished to live, or to have lands, or goods, or his favour. Alas! that any man should be so moody, and should so puff up himself, and think himself above all other men! May Almighty God have mercy on his soul, and grant him forgiveness of his sins!" *

The most remarkable event in the reign of Rufus was the first *crusade*—a war undertaken by various European princes to rescue Palestine from the Mahometans. Peter the Hermit was the man who induced so many thousands of men, women, and children to join the crusades. He said that all persons who joined the holy war should receive pardon for all their sins, and that if they died in battle they should go to heaven. Pope Urban II. warmly espoused his cause, and Peter set out with a view to rouse the feelings of all against the Mahometans. "He set out, from whence I know not, nor with what design; but we saw him at that time passing through the towns and villages, preaching every where, and the people surrounding him in crowds, loading him with presents, and celebrating his sanctity with such high eulogiums, that I never remember to have seen such honours

* Saxon Chron., 189—191.

paid to any other person. He showed himself very generous, however, in the distribution of the things given to him. He brought back to their homes the women that had abandoned their husbands—not without adding gifts of his own—and re-established peace between those who lived unhappily, with wonderful authority. In everything he said or did, it seemed as if there was something divine; so much so, that people went to pluck some of the hairs from his mule, which they kept afterwards as relics; which I mention here, not that they really were so, but only served to satisfy the public love of anything extraordinary. While out of doors he wore a woollen tunic, with a brown mantle, which fell down to his heels. He had his arms and his feet bare, ate little or no bread, and lived upon fish and wine." *

There were eight crusades in all, which lasted for a period of two hundred years, and upwards of three millions of Europeans perished in the East. They ended in the reign of Edward I., A.D. 1292. These eight wars were called the Crusades, because the soldiers wore a cross on their right shoulders. Every man who joined the sanctified army wore the sign of the cross upon one of his shoulders. The English had them white—the French, red—the Flemish, green—the Germans, black—and the Italians, yellow. Many adventurers assumed that "sacred emblem," in the belief that it would afford a perpetual absolution for any crimes they might commit. Thieves and murderers—liars and slanderers—criminals of every dye, joined the crusaders. For a few years they were the plague of Europe, and the scourge of Asia and Egypt. They ruined millions of families—rich as well as

* Guibert Nogent.

poor. Murders, rapes, and robberies, were every where committed with impunity by the pretended armies of Christ. Whatever wrong the crusaders might do, they had full pardon of all their sins—past, present, or future—confirmed to them by the papal bulls. In addition to this, they were told that angels would carry their souls straight to heaven, if they died in the holy warfare.

Great was the number of those who joined the crusades even in England, and laughable are some of the tales told by old writers about folk who *would* join the "most holy army." In most cases the parting of children and parents, husbands and wives, was most touching. On the other hand, some wives and mothers there were, who in their fanatic zeal animated their husbands and sons to the journey, and parted from them without a tear.

M. Guizot has shown, in his admirable "Lectures on European Civilization," that great *good* resulted from the crusades. The Mahometans looked upon the crusaders as the most brutal, ferocious, and stupid mortals it had ever been their lot to behold. The crusaders, on the other hand, were struck with the exhibition of wealth, and the refinement of manners, amongst the Moslems. Here, then, was one grand result of the crusades. Society was civilized by intercourse with foreign nations, heroic deeds roused the imagination of poets, and enlarged intercourse with men produced enlarged ideas. Navigation and shipbuilding, commerce and agriculture, literature and science, arts, &c., were all benefited.

The Pope's power in this country was great in this period, especially towards the end of it. The progress of his dominion exhibits one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the world. It

was a form of tyranny the most appalling. Various causes contributed to its progress—the decline of learning in the south of Europe—political changes—the ambition of popes—the servility of the clergy—the knavery of many distinguished ecclesiastics, and the ignorance of others; and the operation of uncontrolled circumstances, moving in the same direction, all contributed to produce and establish the foolish, crafty, and hellish system. An illustration of the satanic aspect it wore towards the civil liberties of mankind, is afforded in the bull issued by Innocent against the barons of England, who had nobly wrung the great charter from their reluctant king:—"On the part of the omnipotent God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by the authority also of the blessed Peter and Paul, his apostles, and by the common consent of our brethren, we reprobate and condemn a treaty of this kind; prohibiting, under pain of our anathema, the king from presuming to observe, and the barons and their accomplices from daring to exact, its conditions." * The bull was treated by the barons with the contempt it deserved.

The boasted successors of Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, were surrounded by a court, and attended by a retinue surpassing the dazzling grandeur of kings. To meet the expenses thus incurred, the most shameless extortions were practised. Well might the people exclaim—"Rome, who is the mother of the churches, shows herself to others, not so much a mother, as a cruel stepdame. The Scribes and Pharisees sit there, placing on men's shoulders burdens too heavy to be borne." †

* Rymer's Federa, Vol. I. p. 135.
† Joan. Saresb.

One of the pope's instruments was Thomas à Becket, who, before he became archbishop of Canterbury, was a very gay and reckless courtier, and lived in splendour; but, after he became head of the priesthood in England, he clothed himself in rags, and lived on the meanest food. He wore sackcloth next his skin: his usual fare was dry bread and bitter water; he flogged himself frequently; and every day washed the feet of thirteen beggars.

Becket did all he could to oppose the second Henry, and the contest ended in Becket's death. The king, being indirectly the cause of the prelate's murder, disgraced himself by riding from Southampton in one night without resting, and, upon seeing Canterbury cathedral at the dawn of day, dismounted from his horse, threw from him his shoes and royal robes, and walked the rest of the way barefooted along a stony road. He next descended the crypt in which the corpse of Becket lay, knelt upon the tombstone, took off some of his clothes, and exposed his back to the scourge. Each of the bishops then took a whip with several lashes, such as were used for penance, and struck the king several times on the shoulders, saying—"As Christ was scourged for our sins, so be thou for thine own;" the rest of the monks present, to the number of about eighty, then took the whips and gave some rather heavy blows, so that the penance endured by the king was not merely nominal. The scourging did not end the deeds of humiliation. Henry remained prostrate a day and a night before the tomb, during which time he took no food: the result of all this was a fever, which confined him to his chamber for several days. In the reign of Henry III., Becket's bones

were enshrined in gold, and pilgrims from all parts paid their devotions at his tomb—which was very properly destroyed in the reign of Henry VIII.

Henry II. assembled a council at Clarendon, in Wilts, a name still famous for the constitutions there enacted, called the "Constitutions of Clarendon," which checked the authority of the Roman see over the English clergy.

In the reign of John, the Pope laid the kingdom under an interdict, and afterwards under a sentence of excommunication. Adams, in speaking of this interdict, says:—"By this sentence the nation was of a sudden deprived of all the exterior rites of religion. The altars were despoiled of their ornaments. The crosses, the relics, the images, the statues of the saints, were laid on the ground; and, as if the air itself were profaned, and might pollute them by its contact, the priests carefully covered them up, even from their own approach and veneration. The use of bells entirely ceased in all the churches. The bells themselves were removed from the steeples, and laid on the ground with the other sacred utensils. Mass was celebrated with shut doors, and none but the priests were admitted to that holy institution. The dead were not interred in consecrated ground, but were thrown into ditches, or buried in common fields. The people were prohibited the use of meat, as in Lent, and debarred from all pleasures and amusements. They were forbidden even to salute each other, or so much as to shave their beards, and give any decent attention to their person and apparel. Every thing wore the appearance of the deepest distress, and of the most immediate apprehension of divine vengeance and

indignation."* The sentence of excommunication was permission for all subjects to rebel, and for any Christian king to make war upon King John and dethrone him.

The monks lived in monasteries; each monk had a separate cell, but the whole fraternity met at meal-times and at their devotions. The larger monasteries were called abbeys and priories, because they were governed by superiors called abbots or priors. Abbots and priors ranked next to the bishops, and in their own monasteries or priories led a jolly life. They had power to confine unruly monks in solitary cells, and to inflict upon them severe bodily chastisement. In monasteries, schools were established for the education of youth; in them, too, travellers were entertained, the oppressed protected, and provisions and medicines distributed freely to the poor; hence many of them were very charitable institutions. They were generally built by or near some river, for the convenience of fishing. The monastic gardens were beautiful, were filled with many sorts of fruits, and the English wines made by the monks were equal to those of Germany, Spain, and France.

The difference between the monks and friars was this: the monks lived in monasteries and abbeys, very often in great luxury; the friars had no fixed residences, but travelled about preaching, and living on charity. The friars and monks were jealous of each other—the former called the monks lazy and luxurious; and the latter called the friars prying busy-bodies!

Henry II. abolished the absurd custom of trial by combat and ordeal. He also granted charters

* New History of Great Britain, pp. 83, 84.

to several towns. The benefits conferred upon townsmen by the royal charters were—liberty to give their daughters in marriage to whom they pleased; the liberty of leaving their property to their children when they died; permission to be governed by magistrates of their own choice; and exemption from various tolls and taxes. Before Beauclerc's reign, parents could not give their daughters in marriage as they liked, but were obliged to obtain the consent of their lord or baron, and had generally to pay him a sum of money for his consent. Neither could parents leave their property to their families, because the people were only slaves—their property belonged to their lord or baron. The condition of slaves was wretched; they could acquire no property, and many of them had to wear iron collars round their necks.

Henry II. divided England into six circuits for the administration of justice, and appointed three judges to each.

In 1119 the order of Knights-Templars was established. The Templars were pious soldiers, who formed themselves into a club to protect the pilgrims who visited the Holy Land. They were so called because they had lodgings near to the Temple of Jerusalem. They took vows of obedience to a grand master whom they had appointed, and also bound themselves to purity of life, to mutual assistance, and to fight continually against the infidel, never turning back from fewer than four adversaries. They wore a white robe, to which was attached a red cross. On their banners were black and white stripes, which signified charity and kindness to their friends, and destruction to their enemies. In 1312 they were sup-

pressed for their extreme wickedness and profligacy.

The king's speech on opening parliament, the first stone arched bridge erected over the Lea by queen Matilda, and from its circular form called Bow-bridge, the payments of rents changed from *kind* into *money*, a fixed standard for weights and measures, and the yard measure taken from the length of Henry's arm, date their origin from the reign of Beauclerc.

Two of the most memorable events in the reign of Richard I. were the massacre of the Jews, and the exploits of Robin Hood. Thousands of Jews were burnt or butchered just because they were Jews. One reason for their being so hated was, that they lent money upon interest—a thing in those days prohibited by the church. The Jews have always been treated with contempt and cruelty by the English without just cause. As an instance of the manner in which those unhappy people were dealt with, we give the following story, related by the chroniclers. There lived at Bristol a very wealthy Jew, who, by the command of King John, was thrown into a dungeon until he should consent to pay 10,000 marks for his liberty. The Jew said he would not pay the money: the king gave orders that a tooth should be drawn every day till he would: the poor Jew lost seven teeth, and, when the man came to draw the eighth, the pain which the Jew had suffered overcame his fortitude, and he consented to pay the 10,000 marks. This was a mild act compared with some of those perpetrated at that period.

Robin Hood was the captain of about one hundred brave and faithful men, who chiefly lived upon the king's deer in Sherwood forest. The

Saxon name of this forest was *Sire-wode,* afterwards altered into that of *Sherwood.* "At the time when the famous Cœur-de-Lion visited Sherwood, there lived within its recesses a man whom the Anglo-Saxon people regarded as their hero, and whose name has been handed down to us in so many tales and poems, that there is some danger of confounding him with the fabled heroes of romance. "There arose among the outlaws at this time, that most famous freebooter, Robert Hode, whom the common people celebrate in their comedies and festivals, and whose exploits, related by the mimes and minstrels, delight them greatly." Little is really known with certainty about Robin Hood; but, as far as can be gathered from the ancient ballads, he owed his position as chief of the marauders to superior intelligence as well as valour. He was a Saxon by birth, and of no higher rank than that of a peasant; the stories which assume that he had been Earl of Huntingdon, or was descended from an earl, are at variance with the older narratives. Among the former is a beautiful romance, which would make him out to be the very child of the woods, born there "among flowering lilies." However this may be, it is certain that he passed his life in the forest, with a band of several hundred archers, who became the terror of all the rich lords, bishops, and abbots in the neighbourhood, especially those of Norman birth. Robin Hood made war upon the rich, but he respected the persons of his own countrymen, and never molested or robbed the poor. The numerous ballads referring to this trait in his character, are in their very existence a proof of what they assert; for no man could have been made the theme of such general eulogium unless he had been much beloved by the

Archery.

people. Little John, the lieutenant of Robin Hood, is scarcely less celebrated than his chief, whose constant companion he was in all his dangers or pleasures. Little John appears to have possessed a skill in archery second only to that of Robin himself, of which so many incredible stories are told by romancers. There is also a third person mentioned by tradition—one Friar Tuck, who thought fit to retain his gown while every other sign of his former calling had disappeared. These were the most noted among Robin Hood's band; a very merry company if we may believe the story-tellers, leading a careless, gipsy life, doing a great deal of harm, no doubt, but presenting, on the whole, a favourable contrast to the cruelty and tyranny of their Norman oppressors." *

The severity of the tyrannical forest laws, introduced by the Conqueror, and the great temptation to break them, must have occasioned numerous outlaws, especially amongst the best marksmen. Such men naturally fled to the woods for shelter, and, forming into troops, protected themselves as well as they could from the dreadful penalties of their delinquency. The ancient punishment for killing the king's deer was loss of eyes and castration—a punishment far worse than death. In Stow's "Annals," we read—"In this time—about the year 1190, in the time of Richard I.—were many robbers and outlaws, among which Robin Hood and Little John, renowned theeves, continued in the woods, despoyling and robbing the goodes of the rich. They killed none but such as would invade them, or by resistance for their own defence. The saide Robert entertained an hundred tall men and good archers, with suche

* Smith's Pic. Hist. of Eng., p. 238.

spoiles and thefts as he got, upon whom four hundred durst not give the onset. He suffered no woman to be oppressed, violated, or otherwise molested; poore men's goods he spared, abundantlie relieving them with that which by theft he got from abbeys and the houses of rich old carles, whom Maior—the historian—blamethe for his rapine and theft; but of all the theeves he affirmeth him to be the prince, and the most gentle theefe." For further information, see Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," and Sir John Hawkins' "History of Music."

Asking marriage banns—marrying in churches —transubstantiation—and the inquisition, were introduced into the church during John's reign. The inquisition was an infamous tribunal founded by Pope Innocent III., to examine and punish all persons who were not sound Roman Catholics. In three hundred years, upwards of three hundred thousand were, by its command, burnt, strangled, or imprisoned as heretics.

Judicial astrology was cultivated with more diligence than the most useful art or science. Prognosticators were so much admired that nearly every prince and nobleman in Europe kept at least one in his family, to cast the horoscopes of his children, discover the success of his designs, and the public events that were to happen. None but astrologers were honoured with the name of mathematicians. With a view to show that these men imposed upon the credulity of their patrons and the people, we mention the following incident:—In the beginning of the year 1186, all the great astrologers in the Christian world agreed in declaring that there would arise, on Tuesday the 16th of September, a most dreadful storm, which

would sweep away not only single houses but even great towns and cities; and that this storm would be followed by a destructive pestilence, bloody wars, and all the plagues that had ever afflicted miserable mortals. This direful prediction spread terror and consternation over Europe. When the awful day drew near, Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury, commanded a solemn fast of three days to be observed throughout his province. But to the utter confusion of poor Baldwin, and the mathematicians, the 16th of September was remarkably serene and fine, and the whole season uncommonly mild and healthy. An old quaint writer says—"And there were no storms all that year, but what the archbishop raised in the church by his own turbulence."

It was dangerous in those times to write satirical verses against men in power. Henry I. condemned one Luke de Barra to have his eyes pulled out, for writing defamatory ballads against him. When the Earl of Flanders warmly interceded for the poet, Beauclerc replied—"This man, being a wit, a poet, and a minstrel, hath composed many indecent songs against me, and sung them openly, to the great entertainment and diversion of my enemies; he shall therefore be punished, to deter others from the like petulance." This damnable sentence was accordingly executed on the unfortunate satirist, who died of the wounds he received in struggling with the executioner.

English commerce greatly increased in this period. Slaves were still among the exports, though at the great council held at Westminster in 1102, it was decreed unlawful to sell slaves openly in the public market. The imports were gold, precious stones, silk, tapestry, furs, spices,

and wines. In every city a jury was appointed to examine the merits and settle the value of wines! Spices were favourite ingredients in their meats, drinks, and medicines—some of which were brought from very distant countries.

In the reign of Richard I. the bailiff of London was called "The Lord Mayor," and the motto "Dieu et mon Droit" was chosen for the royal arms. The motto is French, and means "*God and my right.*" It was used by Cœur de-Lion as a field-word when he besieged Giscore in Normandy. Coats of arms were invented by the crusaders, to distinguish one leader from another when clad in armour. Every knight chose his own device; but as it was thought a great honour to have had something to do with the crusades, the sons preserved the same device in their families, and thus coats of arms became hereditary. The crests were painted on the shields of the leaders. Richard I. adopted as his emblem three lions *passant*, which are still on the royal shield of England.

It was not till the reign of Henry II. that London became generally recognized as the capital of the kingdom. In the city and suburbs there were then about thirteen monasteries, more than one hundred churches, and a fixed population of about 40,000. In the same reign London bridge was commenced to be built of stone; for this purpose the course of the Thames was turned aside by cutting a canal from Rotherhithe to Battersea, through which the water flowed whilst the workmen were at work in the bed of the river.

In 1174, the water in the Thames was so low that people walked across between the bridge and tower of London, the water only reaching up to the knees.

In 1174, Henry II. called together the nobility of Languedoc, in order to meditate a peace between the Count of Thoulouse and the King of Arragon. As Henry, however, did not attend, the nobles had nothing to do but to emulate each other in wild magnificence and barbarity. The following instances, bordering upon insanity, show the spirit of those early ages. The Countess of Urgel sent to the meeting a diadem worth two thousand pounds, to be placed on the head of a wretched buffoon. The Count of Thoulouse sent a diadem of four thousand pounds to a favourite knight, who distributed that sum among the poorer knights. Another nobleman gave an immense dinner, cooked by the flame of wax tapers. But the singular magnificence of Count Bertrand Rimbault attracted the loudest applause; for he set the peasants around Beaucaire to plough up the soil, in which he sowed *small pieces of money*, to the amount of fifteen hundred English guineas. Piqued at this princely extravagance, and determined to surpass his neighbours in savage brutality, if he could not in prodigality, Lord Raymond, having ordered thirty of his most beautiful and valuable horses to be tied to stakes and surrounded with dry wood, heroically lighted the piles, and consumed his favourites alive! *

In the reign of Stephen, upwards of 1100 castles were built by the barons: the king permitted them to do so, as well as to hunt in their own forests. Most of the castles built in Stephen's reign were demolished by Henry II., because the barons and their adherents used to go about ravaging and plundering, and afterwards sought refuge in their strong castles to escape punishment.

* Adams—New History of Great Britain, pp. 99, 100.

In the year 1100 the sea overflowed 4000 acres of land which had belonged to Godwin, or Goodwin, father of Harold II. Godwin had left the lands by will to the monks of Canterbury; but, as they neglected to repair the wall, the sea rushed in and entirely covered them. The lands are to this day called the Godwin Sands; they often prove fatal to mariners. "The sands, though like quicksand, are clean and unconnected; yet they be so close, that it is difficult to work a pointed iron bar into them more than to the depth of six or seven feet."

It was the barbarous custom, at the beginning of this period, to confiscate ships which had been wrecked on the coast. In 1276 it was enacted, that no ship should be deemed a wreck out of which a *man*, a *dog*, or a *cat* had escaped.

The kings of England usually repeated the ceremony of coronation three times every year: after Stephen's reign it was discontinued, as being useless and expensive.

The first standing army, and the annual election of a mayor and two sheriffs by the citizens of London, date their origin from the reign of John.

In this period lived Nicholas Brekespere, the only Englishman who ever sat in St. Peter's chair. He was born at St. Alban's, and in his youth did the meanest work about the abbey of that place; being refused "the habit" in that monastery, he went to Rome, and after many changes of fortune became a bishop. In 1154 he became pope, and took the name of Adrian IV.; whereupon Henry II. of England sent the abbot of St. Alban's, with three bishops, to congratulate him: Adrian returned the compliment by granting the king a bull

for the conquest of Ireland. He was choked by a fly, in the fifth year of his pontificate, A.D. 1159.

A true lover of liberty was Fitz-Osbert, or Long-beard—the "saviour of the poor." He formed a secret association, which is said to have numbered 52,000, all of whom swore to obey him. On one occasion he was summoned before a council, composed of the barons and higher ecclesiastics, where the most strange accusation was brought against him, that he had excited among the lower classes of the people the love of liberty and happiness. He was called the king of the poor. His end was that of a martyr.

John de Courcy, Earl of Ulster, was famous for his strength and prowess. To him and his descendants John granted the privilege of wearing their hats in the king's presence—the present representative is Lord Kinsale.

Anselm was the first archbishop who restrained the English clergy from marrying. Such an act cannot place his name among those who were the "heroes and scholars" of that age.

We will conclude the present chapter with a brief sketch of the condition of the English, from the Norman conquest to the end of the period now under consideration. Of all the stages through which this world had to pass in its growth to civilization, that of feudalism was the worst—the most degrading, the most inhuman, and the most cruel. The majority of the people were tools—slaves—to be used in peace or war as the barons pleased. With the exception of a few proprietors of lands, freemen, and socmen, all were slaves; and this state of personal slavery continued longer than is generally supposed. Of feudalism, and its odiousness in the eyes of the people, M.

Guizot gives a clear and lucid description. We give a part of the passage:—"Hence, I believe that hatred—truly prodigious—invincible—which the people has borne at all times towards the feudal régime, its remembrance, and its name . . . . Feudal despotism has always been odious, repulsed; it has weighed upon the destinies, without ever reigning in the souls." *

These were the days when men were compelled to extinguish their fires and lights at the sound of the curfew; when farms and villages were destroyed, and their inhabitants driven forth that their places might be occupied by the king's forests, whose game and wild beasts were more precious than men. You might kill a man for twelve-pence; but kill a deer or wound a king's hound, and the punishment would be a slit nose, the loss of ears, or it might be the right hand, or even life. Such was feudalism; and it was only in rare cases where the priest interfered—and he was the only man who did or dared to interfere—that its cruelties were lessened, or its dreadful punishments and tortures in any wise mitigated. To the people it was a period of miserable slavery.†

This state of things could not and did not last long. The poor Saxons, though cruelly oppressed and beaten under foot, still made their sting felt. Some bold men, the favourite heroes of our oldest ballads, betook themselves to the woods, and there, in defiance of the laws, waged predatory war against their oppressors. Assassination was an event of daily occurrence. Many Normans suddenly disappeared, leaving no trace—the corpses

* Guizot—Hist. de la Civilization en Europe, Quatrieme Leçon, pp. 80, 81.

† Langford—Eng. Democracy, p. 10.

of many were found bearing the marks of violence; death by torture was denounced against the murderers, and strict search was made for them, but generally in vain, for the whole nation was in a conspiracy to screen them.* From the natural reaction of the oppressed against their tyrants—the intense and deathless hatred of the Saxons to feudalism, the pet institution of their conquerors—the dissensions which soon arose amongst the Norman monarchs themselves, inducing each party to offer the people greater privileges and wider freedom as the reward for their services—the undertaking of foreign wars, in which they evinced great courage—the slow amalgamation of the races, softening animosities and making their interests common—the frequent manumission of serfs—who can wonder that the English made the base and cowardly John sign the Great Charter, that noble foundation on which so many liberties were founded?† The people, assisted by a few barons, made the cruel, weak-headed, and bad-hearted John sign the Magna Charta at Runnymede, on the 15th day of June, 1215.

The Magna Charta was a long piece of parchment, containing sixty-three clauses written in Latin—some respecting liberty, and others respecting property. Some of the clauses respecting liberty were—that one weight and measure should be used throughout the country—that "every freeman should have full liberty to quit the kingdom and return to it, saving his allegiance, and unless it were in time of war"—that none should be condemned without trial—that justice should not be sold or deferred—and that "common

* Macaulay—Hist. of England—Vol. I., Ch. 1, page 13.
† Langford.

pleas shall not follow our court, but shall be holden in some place certain." But perhaps the most important enactment of the charter was that which declared that none shall be condemned without trial, and that justice shall not be sold or deferred. Chapter xxix. reads thus:—"No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or be disseised of his freehold, or his liberties, or free customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any otherwise destroyed; nor will we not pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by careful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. We will sell to no man, we will not deny or defer to any man, either justice or right."

Some of its provisions respecting property were, that a man at his death may leave his property to whomsoever he likes—if a man dies without a will, his family, and not the king, shall inherit—no officer of the crown shall use a man's horse and cart without his leave, &c. &c.

By this charter the laws of the old Saxon kings were epitomized and guaranteed—liberty both of person and property was established. But it must not be supposed that it was accepted by our monarchs as a settled law, which they were bound to obey. Every opportunity was taken to evade its enactment, and in the next six reigns it underwent no less than thirty-five ratifications—a strong proof that the kings hated it, and that the people loved it, and were determined to have it!

The ancient Britons—the Romans—the Scandinavians—and the Normans, were combined for the production of the English race, and in that race all the prominent characteristics are blended, and yet distinctly marked. The Norman conquest gave us rulers, but not a people. Our language

is a proof of this. Trench, in his analysis of our modern English, shows that, if we divide it into a hundred parts, sixty will be Saxon, thirty Latin, five Greek, and only five a combination of other languages, including Norman-French and French.

The English nation may be said to have become thoroughly amalgamated and completed within one hundred years of the Conquest. For some time after the Conquest the Normans treated the poor English with the greatest cruelty and contempt. Such was the contempt with which they were treated, that in the time of Richard I. the ordinary imprecation of a Norman "gentleman" was, "May I become an Englishman!" His ordinary form of indignant denial was, "Do you take me for an Englishman?" * But the two races which were such irreconcilable enemies—the Saxon hating the Norman with all the fierce bitterness of a degraded foe, and the Norman despising the Saxon with all the contempt of an irresponsible lord or master—were, towards the end of this period, united in their demands, and were willing to shed their blood together for the attainment of their common liberties.

* Macaulay—Hist. of England—Vol. I. Ch. 1, page 17.

CHAPTER IV.

Manners and Customs, &c., of the English, from 1216 to 1399—during the reigns of Henry III., the three first Edwards, and Richard II.

THOUGH the extensive expeditions of the English on the continent and to the east in the Crusades caused some changes, yet the manners and customs which prevailed during this period were much the same as those described in the last chapter. The style of living amongst the wealthy was rudely magnificent, lavish, and lordly; an almost unlimited hospitality reigned in the houses of kings, and castles of the great barons. Some of the courts of the English kings were splendid and great; that of Richard II. is thus described by Stow:—"His royalty was such, that wheresoever he lay, his person was guarded by two hundred Cheshiremen; he had about him thirteen bishops, besides barons, knights, esquires, and others; insomuch that ten thousand people came to the household for meat every day, as appeared by the messes told out of the kitchen to three hundred servitors." This king lived in a more magnificent and extravagant style than any of his predecessors or successors. He kept two thousand cooks; and when he celebrated Christmas at Westminster Hall, the daily consumption was twenty-eight oxen, three hundred sheep, and fowls almost without number. When he came to the throne, the city fountains were made to flow with wine instead of water; and the year after, at his coro-

nation, four different sorts of wine were made to flow through the public channels.

The feasts at the coronations of kings, the installations of prelates, the marriages of great nobles, and on some other occasions, were profuse in number of dishes; the guests entertained sometimes amounted to many thousands. The coronation banquet of Edward III. cost a sum equal to £40,000 of our money. At the installation of Ralph, abbot of St. Augustine, at Canterbury, in 1309, six thousand guests sat down to three thousand dishes, which cost a sum equal to £45,000 present money. At the marriage-dinner of the Earl of Cornwall, in London, in 1243, thirty thousand dishes were served up. Matthew of Paris, in speaking of the marriage-feast of Alexander III. of Scotland and Margaret of England, held at York, in 1281, says—"If I attempted to describe the grandeur of this solemnity, the number of the illustrious guests, the richness and variety of the dresses, the sumptuousness of the feasts, the multitude of the minstrels, mimics, and others whose business it was to amuse and divert the company, my readers would think I was imposing on their credulity." The manner of living amongst the great barons is shown by the household accounts of the Earl of Lancaster, in 1313. In that year the earl expended a sum of money equivalent to £109,635 of our money. Wines being cheaper then, it would at the present time require a far greater sum than that to maintain an equal hospitality; the quantity of wine consumed in the earl's establishment in that year was 471 pipes, or 59,346 gallons.

Towards the conclusion of this period this profuse hospitality was on the decline; and the

wealthy, instead of dining in the great halls with their dependants, began to dine in private parlours with a few familiar friends. This change, however, was extremely unpopular, and subjected those who adopted it to much reproach.

In the reign of Edward II. eleven o'clock in the morning was the most fashionable dinner-hour, six the supper hour. The dinner-time in the reign of Edward III. was about nine o'clock in the morning, and supper-time at four in the afternoon. It was not till the reign of Richard II. that we read of the rich having breakfast; in that reign we find that bread, wine, beer, beef, herrings, and brawn, were set upon the breakfast table. In serving up the dishes at meal-times, every thing was made to look as showy and grand as possible: the roasted pig was decorated with gold and silver leaf, jellies and pies were made into quaint figures to resemble angels, saints, &c. The grandest dish brought to the table was a roasted peacock, with all its feathers stuck on. Between the courses, representations of battles, sieges, ships, &c., were introduced for the amusement of the guests.

In the reign of Edward III., the English were such monstrous gormandizers that they were forbidden by law to have more than two courses at dinner! Intemperance in eating and drinking rendered this law necessary—at least so thought the legislature—the public health was injured, and butchers' cattle had greatly diminished.

The art of fattening cattle in winter time was then unknown. In autumn, when cattle were fattest, Englishmen killed cows and sheep, &c., enough to last them till the following spring. They managed to keep their meat so long by salting and pickling it. They had, however, fresh

meat sometimes during winter; being fond of field-sports, they procured venison, hares, birds, fish, &c. The vegetables used at table in Edward II.'s reign, were carrots, parsnips, and cabbages. Potatoes were not known till the year 1563, in the reign of Elizabeth.

With respect to the drinks of this period, ale and cider satisfied the majority of the people; but the wealthy imported and consumed a great variety of foreign wines.

We have already said that people had at least two meals a-day—dinner and supper. Besides these, people of rank had a kind of collation just before going to bed, called "*the wines*," consisting of delicate cakes and wine warmed and spiced. From a passage in Chaucer it would appear that they ate spiced condiments after their meals, as we take a dessert :—

> "There was eke wexing many a spice,
> As clove, gilofre, and licorice,
> Gingiber, and grain de Paris;
> And many a spice delitable,
> To etan whan men rise fro table."

It is evident that our forefathers who possessed wealth, knew something of the art of "good living."

Great complaints were made by historians of the extravagance in dress during this period. The various and ridiculous fashions were very justly the subject of bitter reprehension from the satirists of the time.

Henry III., whose monument is in Westminster Abbey, is represented as wearing a long and very full tunic, and a mantle fastened on the right shoulder—both devoid of ornament. The boots are, however, very splendid—illustrating the

expression *fretatus de auro;* and each square of the fret containing a lion or leopard. The cloth he wore is said to have been woven with gold; on his head he wore a coronet, or small circle of gold, called in the language of that day a chaplet, or garland. In the thirteenth century, the materials for dress became more numerous and costly. Velvet is mentioned under the Latin name of *villosa.* In the early part of this period, the male costume consisted generally of a loose long tunic, *chaussés* or stockings, drawers, and, when travelling, a supertotus or overall. Short dresses afterwards prevailed, with close-fitting hose and shoes. The shoes in the early part of this time fitted well to the foot, but afterwards assumed enormous long toes, which are represented as suspended to the knees by chains or cords. We have already spoken of a law which was made to restrain excess in eating; in 1363, sumptuary enactments respecting dress were in like manner passed in parliament, though we are told that some of those laws were utterly disregarded. "The squire endeavoured to outlive the knight, the knight the baron, the baron the earl, and the earl the very king himself." * Poor people were forbidden to wear silver and gold embroidery on their dresses; and no subject was to use foreign cloth, because Edward III. wished to encourage the English cloth manufacture. In 1331 two cloth-weavers from Brabant settled in York; before that time, only very coarse woollen cloth was made in this country—the finer sort was imported from Flanders. About this period the Scots had a rhyme, which ran thus:—

* Quoted by Planché in his Hist. of British Costume.

"Long beirds hertiless,
Peynted hoods witless,
Gay cotes graceless,
Maketh Englonde thriftless."

In the reign of Richard II. the vanity of the labouring class in their dress was so great that it was impossible to distinguish the rich from the poor, the high from the low, the clergy from the laity, by their appearance.* The greatest fop of the day was probably the king himself; he was therefore, like most fops and snobs, of little use in this world. He had a coat estimated at 30,000 marks, the value of which must have arisen chiefly from the quantity of precious stones with which it was embroidered. It was also the fashion at this time to work letters and mottoes, &c., into the shape of leaves and other devices. Place Edward I. by the side of the royal fop, Richard II. What a contrast! The first Edward never wore his crown after the day of his coronation, and preferred the dress of the common citizen to the royal garments of purple. Being one day asked why he did not wear richer apparel, he answered, with the consciousness of real worth, that it was absurd to suppose he could be more estimable in fine than in simple clothing.† In Richard II.'s reign, the dress of men was long, very luxurious, and often with open sides, and preposterously long-toed shoes. These shoes were called *crackowes*, being supposed to come from Cracow. The capuchon or head-dress in some cases resembled a simple cap or rounded hat, in others assumed very much the character of a turban.

Just imagine a dandy of the fourteenth century!

* Knighton.
† Hist. of British Costume by Planché, p. 131.

Camden's description of one is particularly ludicrous, and we give it:—"He wore long pointed shoes, fastened to his knees by gold or silver chains; hose of one colour on one leg, and of another colour on the other. Short breeches, not reaching to the middle of the thigh; a coat, one half white, and the other half black or blue; a long beard, a silk band buttoned under his chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, dancing-men, &c., and sometimes ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones.'

The origin of our words *jacket* and *slop* may be traced to this period. John of Gaunt and the Black Prince introduced the jacket and paletot. Short jackets with long wide sleeves, called *Pokys*, were worn both by masters and servants. The monk of Eversham ridiculed those sleeves as the devil's receptacles for whatever could be stolen and popped in. Some were so long and wide that they reached to the feet, others to the knees, and were full of slits. When servants were carrying pottage, sauces, &c., their sleeves were apt to get saturated with the contents.

The dresses of women were as varied as those of the men. In the early part of this period they wore long dresses, and on their heads a sort of hood or cowl, called a *gorget*. John de Meun describes it as wrapped two or three times round the neck; and then, being fastened with a great quantity of pins, it was raised on either side the face as high as the ears. So long did women wear their gowns, that a poet of the thirteenth century compares the ladies of his day to peacocks and magpies: He says, "for the pies naturally bear feathers of various colours; so the ladies delight in strange habits and diversity of ornaments. The

pies have long tails that trail in the dirt; so that the ladies make their tales a thousand times longer than those of peacocks and pies." Another satirist of that day advises the ladies, if their legs be not handsome, nor their feet small and delicate, to wear long robes trailing on the pavement to hide them; those, on the contrary, who have pretty feet, are counselled to elevate their robes, as if for air and convenience, that all who pass by may see and admire them! In Edward I.'s reign there was a rational complaint against a very ugly species of wimple, called a gorget, which covered the chin, throat, and ears. Another complaint about this time is tight-lacing—the waists of women were pinched in to make them look very slim. Towards the end of this period women's dresses began to assume the fashion of modern gowns. "Aprons richly embroidered appeared, and the female costume of Edward's III.'s time would pass very well now; the gown fitting elegantly to the bust, and of modern proportion, but without any crinoline."* The fashion of wearing daggers stuck through pouches, became very general amongst knights and gentlemen about the time of the third Edward; and we may therefore fairly presume that the ladies then, as now, affected male attire in their riding-habits, with peculiar alterations, caprices of their own, which were in turn eagerly caught at and imitated by the fops and gallants of the day.†

The ploughman in the "Canterbury Tales," rails at the clergy for riding glittering with gold upon high horses, gayer than any common knight might go—wearing golden girdles, and gowns of

* Howitt's Pic. Hist. of Eng., pp. 479-80.
† Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, pp. 170-1.

scarlet and green, ornamented with cut-work. They also wore the long piked shoes, and were armed, even like the men of war, with broad bucklers and long swords, and so forth. He says, many priests had mitres embellished with pearls, like the head of a queen, and a staff of gold set with jewels.

In the reign of Edward III., the military costume was changed from the chain mail of the Knights Templars to plated armour, which was much more heavy.

The Scotch, except those in the Highlands, dressed much the same as the English did; but the Welsh paid very little attention to dress.

Linen was introduced by the Flemings in the reign of Henry III.; before then the English wore woollen shirts. It was in this reign that aldermen were first allowed to wear gowns. In the time of the third Edward, Thomas Blanket, of Bristol, established looms for weaving the woollen cloths which still bear his name.

In architecture, sculpture, and painting, great progress was made, especially in the two first-mentioned arts. "The more we contemplate the buildings of this period, the more we are struck with admiration at the wonderful powers of invention possessed by the architects and workmen of the time. Wherever ornament was wanted, there it was ready, and always beautiful and appropriate. They possessed a keen perception of the beauties of nature, and hands capable of giving form to those perceptions."* A number of the best architects formed themselves into a company, and went from place to place as they were wanted; they lived in movable huts, and called themselves

* William Howitt.

"Freemasons." Of the domestic buildings of the fourteenth century, many good specimens still remain. Many of them were built for defence; hence the saying that "an Englishman's house is his castle," which at that time was literally true. They were mostly moated, and contained but few rooms, of which the hall was larger than the rest. In the reign of Edward III., castles were made more comfortable for the inmates than they formerly were, and were adorned with beautiful windows. The "keep" was a separate building. The houses in London were mostly thatched with straw till the reign of Henry III., when it was ordered that all houses in the city should be covered with tiles or slates, particularly such as stood in the best streets, which were then very few when compared with modern London; for where Cheapside now stands was a field, and from Temple-Bar to the village of Westminster was a country road, having gentlemen's houses adjoining it.

Fires were not generally used in private houses during this period; except for cooking, they were not thought needful. Chimneys were by no means common; and therefore fires in private rooms would have been a nuisance. The students of Oxford and Cambridge were not allowed to have fires till the reign of Henry VIII. When the students were cold, they had to run and warm themselves. It was not till the reign of Henry III. that coal was used as fuel instead of wood; indeed, we find no mention of that useful mineral till then. A licence was granted to the people of Newcastle to dig coal; but, in the next reign, a proclamation was issued forbidding its use as a public nuisance.

Painted ceilings and walls in the houses of the

rich prevailed before the time of the third Henry. Scripture and romantic subjects predominated in those decorations. The "Painted Chamber" at Westminster was embellished in this manner. At this time, the English had painted glass windows not only in churches, but in private houses. In different old illuminated MSS., we have specimens of the chairs, beds, reading-desks, and other furniture. The oldest chair in this country is probably that of Edward the Confessor, or so called, still used in Westminster Abbey as the coronation chair. Fine beds of black satin, of blue, red, and white silk, and black velvet, are mentioned in the works of old authors. The bed of Richard III.'s mother was of red velvet, embroidered with representations of ostrich feathers, which were of silver, and representations of the heads of leopards, which were of gold, with boughs and leaves coming out of their mouths. Many of the beds had testers and canopies, others had hangings of tapestry, illustrated in needlework with pictures of battles and great events, as well as scenes from the Scriptures, and from the favourite romances. Matthew of Paris informs us that Eleanor, wife of Edward I., covered the floor of her room with tapestry, at which there was no little scoffing. Forks were used in Italy as early as the year 1330, but not until the seventeenth century in England. The same writer gives us a good idea of a cupboard of plate, which he tells us contained a cup of gold, six quart standing pots of silver, twenty-four silver bowls with covers, a basin, a ewer, and a chasoir of silver. Silver and silver-gilt plate, dishes, chargers, salt-cellars, spoons, silver lavatories, spice-plates, knives with silver

handles, and a fork belonging to Edward I., are frequently mentioned by old authors. Fire-screens standing on feet were in use in the reign of the first Edward, also ornamented andirous or fire-dogs. Clocks which struck and chimed the hour are mentioned at the close of the thirteenth century. In the early part of the reign of Edward I., there were only two clocks in England —one of which was placed over the gateway at Westminster, and the other in Canterbury Cathedral. Striking clocks were invented by Richard Wallingford, an English abbot of St. Albans. The pendulum was not used in clocks till three hundred years afterwards. It was invented by Huygens, a Dutchman, in 1662.

The diversions of the English at this period, were much the same as those described in the last. In the feudal ages every Englishman who did not possess land to the value of forty shillings a-year, was required to qualify himself for a bowman. The practice of archery in the villages, from boy-hood upward, produced those famous bowmen who cleared the fields of Crecy and Poictiers of opponents. Towards the end of Edward III.'s reign, the practice of archery was on the decline amongst the people. Rymer, in speaking of archery, says, "that art is now neglected, and the people spend their time in throwing stones, wood, or iron; in playing at the hand-ball, foot-ball, or club-ball; in bull-baiting and cock-fighting, and in more useless and dishonest games." By the "dishonest games" we suppose is meant such games of chance as cross and pile. We read that Edward II. spent both time and money in these games, and that he used to borrow money of his barber and the usher of his chamber while at such

play. Wrestling for a ram was a favourite diversion—a wrestling-match of this kind, between London and Westminster, in the year 1222, ended in a regular bloody battle.

In Richard II.'s reign, cards were invented by Jaquemin Gringonneur, of Paris, to amuse Charles VI. of France, who was insane. But they do not appear to have been so early introduced into this country. Being drawn and painted by the hand, they were dear, and not in general use until the reign of Edward IV. The price of a single pack was eighteen shillings and eightpence—no small sum in those days. Originally, they were different from those in use at the present time. Their shape was square, and instead of suits of spades, clubs, hearts, and diamonds, their marks were rabbits, roses, pinks, and flowers of columbine. The figured cards were prettily devised—a rustic-looking man, grotesquely dressed, and standing in a strange attitude, with a pink by his side, signified the knave of pinks or diamonds. A queen riding with a rabbit beside her, indicated the queen of rabbits or clubs.

Tournaments, hunting, dancing, pageants, and disguisings, were the diversions of the kings and "nobles," as well as the delight of the people whenever they could witness them. In that day the *drama* appeared under the form of "Mysteries and Moralities," or "Miracle-plays," which were acted in the churches and monasteries. Sacred passages and personages of the Scriptures were introduced in the most free and curious manner. Adam and Eve appeared without the slightest aid from the draper or tailor, and this too without seeming to give rise to any scandal. Poor Noah had a terrible time of it to get his wife into the

Football.

ark, and when he did succeed, she rewarded him with a sounding box on the ear, &c. &c.

The Tragetours, or jugglers, gave much amusement in the streets, and, according to Chaucer, legerdemain must have reached considerable perfection, for he says the tragetours could make people believe they saw a boat come swimming into a hall—a lion walk in—flowers spring up as in a meadow—castles, apparently of solid lime and stone, appear, and then vanish again, &c.

An ostentatious kind of gallantry, expressive of the profoundest respect and highest admiration of the beauty and virtues of the fair sex, was studied and practised by the martial barons, knights, and esquires. This gallantry was most shown at grand tournaments, at which the ladies appeared in their richest dresses. "The tournaments are attended by many ladies of the first rank and greatest beauty, dressed in party-coloured tunics. Their tippets are very short, their caps remarkably small, and wrapt about their heads with cords; their girdles are ornamented with gold and silver; and they bear short swords, like daggers, before them, which hang across the stomach. They are mounted on the finest horses, with the richest furniture; thus equipped, they ride from place to place in quest of tournaments, by which they dissipate their fortunes, and often ruin their reputation." *

Sometimes knights would assert that the ladies whom they loved were superior in beauty and virtues to any others, and challenge all who dared to dispute that superiority, to meet them at a certain time and place to determine the important question by combat. These challenges were often

* Knyghton.

accepted, and produced tournaments, to which princes, knights, and ladies of different nations crowded. This romantic gallantry displayed itself in peace and in war; and youthful knights fought as much, and sometimes a good deal more, for the honour of their belles as for their country. In 1379 a party of English and French cavalry met near Cherbourg, and when about to engage, Sir Lancelot de Lorres, a French knight, cried aloud that he had a more beautiful belle than any of the English, whereupon Sir John Copeland denied it, and ran his spear through the Frenchman's body, laying him dead at his feet. When Edward III. raised an army to assert his right to the crown of France, a great number of young Englishmen put patches upon their eyes, and made vows to their belles that they would not take them off till they had performed some feats in France to their honour.

Chivalry declined in England during the reigns of John and Henry III., but revived under Edward I., who was one of the most accomplished knights of his time. The third Edward was also a lover of chivalry: he encouraged it as much as any man. It was this king who created the *Order of the Garter*, the most honourable military order in England. It consists of twenty-six knights, who are generally peers, of whom the king himself is the chief. They are so called, because they wear on the left leg a garter made of blue ribbon set with pearls, and inscribed with the motto, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" The origin of the order of the garter is disputed. A story prevails, that the Countess of Salisbury at a ball, happening to drop one of her garters, the king took it up, and observing some of the courtiers

smiling, said with contempt the words just now mentioned. From this incident possibly arose the order of the garter.

At the beginning of this period the pope's power was at its height; but towards the end it received a shock from which it never recovered—the days of the pope's power in England were numbered. Enormous was the sum of money which the holy court of Rome got from this country, in addition to the "Peter's pence:" the livings were given to infants, and to lazy, ignorant, and unprincipled Italians, who could not speak a word of English, and who carried out of the country the money arising from their benefices. From the arts of the priesthood, and the superstition of the people, the possessions of the church went on growing to such an extent, that they are said to have amounted to three-fourths of the property of the whole kingdom, and threatened to swallow up all its lands. To put a stop to this fearful condition of things, Edward I. passed his famous statute of mortmain in 1279, and thus arrested the progress of the papal avarice. The insatiable avarice and unbearable tyranny of the court of Rome gave such disgust in the fourteenth century, that a bold attack was made on it and its doctrines. John Wycliffe has the honour of being the first man in Europe who publicly called in question the doctrines which had passed as true and good for so many ages. When he died of palsy, at his rectory, the clergy assured the people that he was gone to eternal damnation, and that his last distemper was a visible judgment of heaven upon him, for his multiplied heresies and impieties! When Greathead, bishop of Lincoln, would not bestow a benefice upon an infant, his holiness put

himself into a furious passion, and swore by St. Peter and St. Paul that he would utterly confound that old, impertinent, deaf, doating fellow, and make him the astonishment of the world. "What!" he exclaimed, "is not England our possession, and its king our vassal, or rather our *slave?*"

From what Thomas Wykes says, when speaking of the civil wars in the reign of Henry III., we conclude that the morals of the nation were any thing but good. He says—"In these five years past, there have been so many battles, both by land and sea, so much slaughter and destruction of the people of England, so many devastations, plunderings, robberies, thefts, sacrileges, perjuries, treacheries, and treasons, that the nation hath lost all sense of distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice." All authors are agreed that corruption of manners was universal in that age, and the most eminent of them agree that the clergy were the cause of it. Enormous was the wealth drawn by Rome from many countries at that time; this led to the most improvident extravagance and dissoluteness in that city, so as to originate the proverb, "The nearer to Rome, the farther from God." No doubt the celibacy of the priesthood made this state of things much worse. The corruption of the church, and the increase of knowledge amongst the people, were preparing the reformation. Every good author joins in denouncing the profligacy of the clergy, who were the "blind teachers of the blind."

"Suche as can nat ysay their crede
With prayer should be made prelates;
Nother canne they the Gospel rede,
Such should now weldin hie estates.

"There was more mercy in Maximine,
And Nero, that never was gode,
Than there is now in some of them
When he hath on his furred hode.

"They halowe nothing but for hire—
Ne churche, ne font, ne testement;
They layith out their large nettes
For to takin silver and gold."

Such is the evidence of Pierce Ploughman—and so he runs through their long catalogue of vices and vanities. Chaucer, too, often condemns the worldliness and vanity of the priests—for example:—

"They hie on horse willeth to ride,
In glitterande golde of grete arrai,
Painted and portrid all in pride,
No common knight maie go so gaie;
Chaunge of clothing every daie,
With golden girdles, grete and small."

Roger Bacon, in speaking of the condition of the appointed teachers of the people, says—"It is believed by all wise men, that the times of Antichrist are near at hand."

If such were the morals and manners of the priesthood, we may form a pretty good idea of the morality of the people. The barons were brave, and affected great hospitality to those of their own rank; but to the poor they were cruel and contemptuous, haughty and oppressive. The ignorance and superstition which prevailed amongst all ranks till the time of good old Wycliffe and the Lollards, are almost incredible. For example—Pope Innocent VI. firmly believed Petrarch to be a magician, *because he read Virgil.* Pilgrimages were performed to distant shrines by all ranks, and the veneration for relics had become wonderful. Matthew of Paris describes Henry III., riding from St. Paul's church to Westminster, to which he had summoned all the "great men" of the kingdom, to see him

carry a bottle of the real blood of Jesus, which he had received from the Knights-Templars at Jerusalem, under the seals and attestations of its genuineness of the patriarch, archbishops, and prelates of Palestine. "When the procession of all the barons, bishops, monks in thousands, and vast crowds of people, was ready to set forward, the king approached the sacred vial with fear and trembling, took it in both his hands, and, holding it up higher than his face, thus proceeded under a canopy, two assistants supporting his arms. In this manner he walked on through the roads, deep in mud, his eyes fixed on the vial, or on heaven."*

The knowledge of political economy possessed by parliament in the famous reign of Edward III. was lamentably low. The topographical knowledge of the commons was ludicrous. They granted the king in 1371, £50,000, by a tax of 22s. 3d. on each parish, supposing the number of parishes to be about 45,000; but, finding they were not one-fifth of that number, they had to alter the rate to £5 10s. per parish. But this was not a greater mistake than that of the English ambassador at Rome six years afterwards, who, finding that the pope had created Lewis of Spain prince of the *Fortunate Islands*, meaning the Canary Isles, immediately hurried home with all his suite to convey the alarming news, that the pope had given the *British Isles* to the king of Spain! The statute-books of this famous king show the most absurd endeavours to disturb the freedom of trade, betraying very little knowledge of the principles of political economy. Wishing to raise a manufacturing system, it was forbidden to import woollen cloths before we could supply

* Matthew of Paris.

the people with home-made goods. Money was prohibited from being carried out of the country. They were obliged to let in foreign cloth, or the people would soon have been naked; yet shortly afterwards they prohibited it again. A famine having taken place, they passed an act to keep down the price of all articles of food; the consequence of which was, nobody would bring any such articles to market, and they were compelled to abolish that. Then they did the same thing by labour, fixing the rate of wages; and yet when Wat Tyler's party, in the following reign, wanted to regulate the price of land, the attempt was pronounced barbarous.* In the reign of Edward III. a law was passed to limit the wages of working people. For haymaking and weeding, each person was to receive a penny a day—reapers of corn in August, threepence a day—master masons, carpenters, and tilers, fourpence a day; not masters, threepence a day—slabs and servants, three-halfpence a day—all without food.

In those times few rich men undertook any great enterprise without first consulting the astrologer; whilst the poor were subject to every species of terror from omens, apparitions, and the like. The administration of justice was notoriously corrupt, and the number of terrible bands of robbers was very great. The physical condition of the people was wretched. In Henry III.'s reign the wealthy were gradually rising into importance, but the peasantry were still bought and sold like cattle. In 1283, a slave was sold by the abbot of Dunstan, with all his family, for thirteen shillings and fourpence—"We sold our slave by birth, William

* Pict. Hist. of England—by William Howitt; pp. 450, 452.

Pike, with all his family, and received one mark from the buyer." Men must then have been cheaper than horses. And in 1333, we read that a grant was made by a lord to a charity of several messuages, together with the bodies of eight natives and their offsprings. At the beginning of this period there were no regular shops—traders went about like hawkers, to sell their goods. Very few of the people could read and write. Even the majority of the monks could not read the Latin prayer-book, which they daily repeated. In those times it was thought an act of great piety to say a prayer or two in Latin, though not a word was understood.

We must say a little about the literature of this period. Latin was the almost universal language of scholars. Bacon wrote his works in Latin, so did most of the chroniclers. It is a strange fact, that while the Roman church continued the use of the Latin tongue, it had neglected and discouraged the reading of the great Roman and Greek writers. So little was the Greek language known, that we find Roger Bacon, in the thirteenth century, declaring that there were not more than three or four men in England who understood Greek, the Oriental languages, or who could pass the fifth proposition of Euclid's First Book—the familiar *pons asinorum*, or Asses' Bridge. The students, in those times knew nothing; for we find that the archbishop of Canterbury, on a visit to Oxford, in 1276, upbraided the students with such mistakes as these—"*Ego currit, tu currit, currens est ego!*" &c. At this time we are told that there were 30,000 students at Oxford. Hume wisely asks what were these young men all about? We answer,

nothing at all, but disputing without meaning or object—perplexing the plainest truths—and sometimes proceeding from the so-called arguments to blows. The most absurd and diabolical things were often taught in colleges in those days. For instance, Nicholas de Ultricuria taught this proposition in the university of Paris about the year 1300—"It may be lawful to steal, and the theft can be pleasing to God. Suppose a young gentleman of good family meets with a very learned professor—meaning himself—who is able in a short time to teach him all the speculative sciences, but will not do it for less than £100, which the young gentleman cannot procure but by theft; in that case theft is lawful. Which is thus proved. Whatever is pleasing to God is lawful. It is pleasing to God that a young gentleman learn all the sciences; but he cannot do this without theft; therefore theft is lawful and pleasing to God."

A conclusive proof of the ignorance, stupidity, and superstition of the priesthood was, that on finding a New Testament in Greek amongst the books of the reformers, they declared it was some new heretical language. Theology was thought more of than the Scriptures by the schoolmen, who in derision were called "Bible-doctors." Each of those "holy and learned" doctors had a band of followers, who seem to have been very fierce in their enmity to those not of their own clique. Brucker tells an amusing story of a scholastic who vented his spleen on Durandus, a celebrated doctor of the thirteenth century, by writing the following epitaph:—

"*Durus Durandus jacet hic sub marmore duro,*
An sit salvandus ego nescio nec quoque curo."

Which may be thus rendered:—

> "Entomb'd in marble pomp,
> Durandus lieth here;
> But whether he be saved or lost,
> I neither know nor care."

Aristotle's works were so blindly and foolishly admired, that at the university of Paris students were compelled to take *a solemn oath* to defend his opinions. In those times the clergy were not only almost the only lawyers, but also the *doctors*, though some of the laity now entered the profession as a distinct branch, and very clever they were. We give a decided proof of their fitness for the office. John Gaddesden, who was educated at Merton college, Oxford, and declared to be the grand luminary of physic, wrote a large and learned work on medicine, and such was its excellence that the illustrious title of "*Medical Rose*" was given to it. The reader may be pleased with a recipe or two from this remarkable work, so we give two—one for the cure of small-pox, and the other to cure epilepsy. "After this (the appearance of the eruption) cause the whole body of your patient to be wrapped in red scarlet cloth, or in any other red cloth, and command every thing about the bed to be made red. This is an excellent cure. It was in this manner I treated the son of the noble king of England, when he had the small-pox, and I cured him without leaving any marks." To cure epilepsy, Gaddesden orders the patient and his parents to "fast three days, and then go to church. The patient must confess; he must have mass on Friday and Saturday, and then on Sunday the priest must read over the patient's head the gospel for September in the time of vintage, after the feast

of the holy cross. After this the priest shall write out this portion of the gospel reverently, and bind it about the patient's neck, and he shall be cured."

The greatest philosopher who lived in this period was Roger Bacon, who was born near Ilchester, in Somersetshire, in 1214. His great work, the "Opus Majus," contains the result of all his researches. In his treatise on optics—"*De Scientia Perspectiva*"—he gives the mode of constructing spectacles, microscopic lenses, &c. He was the inventor of spectacles, and probably of gunpowder, which came into use in the reign of Edward III. Bacon was the martyr of science. The ignorant monks of his order, instead of benefiting by his discoveries, accused him of necromancy, and dealing with the devil. For years this man, a marvel of the age in which he lived, was kept in close confinement, and was not allowed to send his "Opus Majus" to any one but the pope at Rome, who procured him his liberty. The good old man was, however, soon imprisoned again, and remained so for about twelve years; after which, though old and broken down by his sufferings, he still continued to work like a true Briton till his death in 1292.

Wycliffe and John Ball did much good; they left the world better than they found it. Wycliffe not only put in active motion the principles of the Reformation, by his preaching and his public defences against the attacks of the authorities of the church, but he made those principles permanent by his translation of the Bible. Not that Wycliffe's was the first translation of the Scriptures into English. Sir Thomas More, in his "Dialogues," says—"The hole Byble was, long before

Wickliffe's days, by vertuous and well-learned men translated into the English tong, and by good and godly people, with devotion and solemness well and reverently red." But the earlier translations of the Bible had remained in the libraries of monasteries, and owing to the scanty education of the people, and the conservative vigilance of the Romish church, had only been read and studied by a few. Wycliffe circulated the Scriptures, and in such a manner that they were never more to become rare and curious. Though he had not clear conceptions of the teachings of "*The perfect Man*," yet for that time he was a good scholar, an admirable Christian, and a liberal man. He had many enemies, but some good friends. He died on the last day of the year 1384. His followers were called Lollards. John Ball, the preacher to Wat Tyler's army, was probably a disciple of John Wycliffe. John Ball believed in and taught the gospel equality of man—that God is no respecter of persons—and that men should do unto others as they would have others do to them. The English had never heard these things before; they had never been allowed to think and act for themselves, but had been down-trodden as slaves and beasts of burden—and when the honest John Ball put these great truths into their heads, who can wonder at the result? At the time Wat Tyler was elected captain of the 100,000 insurgents at Maidstone, John Ball, the chaplain, took for the text of his first sermon the good old rhyme—

"When Adam delved, and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

Froissart says that the people, "of whom there be more in England than in any other realm, loved John Ball, and said that he said the truth."

Towards the end of this period, eminent authors began to write their works in their native tongue, instead of in Latin. In Italy, Dante had set the example, Froissart had done it in French, and now our great poets did the same. "In the course of the fourteenth century, the Anglo-Saxon gradually changed into what may be called the English language, and forced its way into the courts of justice, from which it had been excluded almost 300 years. That animosity was now extinguished which had long subsisted between the posterity of the Normans and of the Anglo-Saxons, who were now in a great measure consolidated into one people. The Normans, who were engaged in agriculture, trade, and manufactures, found it necessary to speak the language of the multitude, into which they introduced many French words and idioms. Besides this, Chaucer, Gower, and several others, composed a number of volumes in English; and, being men of learning, borrowed many expressions from the Greek, Latin, Italian, and French languages, with which they enriched their own. But the mode of spelling was unsettled, and very different from the modern. Several words were then in common use which are now become obsolete; and the meaning of several words was very different from what it is at present. A knave, for example, signified a servant, in opposition to a freeman; and sometimes a male, in opposition to a female: "*The time is come*," says Chaucer, "*and a knave child she bare.*" Its modern meaning is well known.* Previous to the third Edward's reign barristers pleaded in French; and therefore, when a person was tried, he did not know a word about his accusation—indeed, the

* Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, p. 120.

jury were often equally ignorant of what the pleader had been saying. When the king attained his fiftieth birthday, to please his subjects, he granted that all pleadings in court should thenceforth be made in English. We have already given an extract from Chaucer, and another from Robert Langlande, who wrote a famous satirical allegory against persons of all professions, called "The Vision of Pierce Ploughman," which is usually considered the first English poem; we give another from *Wicliffe's Bible*, Luke xv. 11, 12—"A man had twey sons, and the younger of hem seide to the fader, geve me the porcioun of cattel that fallith to me."

The great poet of this period was Geoffrey Chaucer, who was born in London in the year 1328. He was brother-in-law of John of Gaunt. Because he attached himself to the good old John Wicliffe, the clergy became his enemies, and were the cause of his leaving England to live in exile; upon his return to this country he was committed to prison. He died in 1400. The great poem of Chaucer is the "Canterbury Tales," which for spirit, humour, and knowledge of the enjoyment of life, rank next to Shakespeare. They are brimful of vigour, beauty, and subtlety—they sparkle, burn, and laugh on every page. He gives us the most vivid picture of his time, and all the varied characters amongst whom he lived. He had a buoyant, genial spirit, and his own share of deep griefs and sorrows. Truly is he called the father of English poetry.

In those times the chief articles of export were only sold in certain places; those places being sometimes on the continent, and sometimes at home. Edward II. ordered that all such articles

as wool, sheepskins, and leather, should not be carried as heretofore to places in Brabant, Flanders, and Artois, but to Antwerp only. In 1348, when Calais was captured by the English, Edward III. made *it* the staple; and five years afterwards removed it again, and ordered that exports should be sold in certain places in England, Ireland, and Wales. When our kings wanted to raise money on tolls, they proclaimed a fair in Westminster, or in some other place, and compelled all the tradesmen within a certain distance to shut up their shops and carry their goods thither. Matthew of Paris tells us, that when Henry III. held a fair at Westminster, it lasted for a fortnight—that the weather was dreadfully wet and cold—that the goods were drenched and spoiled—and that the traders were obliged to eat their victuals standing deep in the mud and wet. A fair at St. Giles's Hill, near Winchester, continued for sixteen days, and all trade was prohibited within seven miles. Immense crowds of all ranks from all parts flocked to it. We are told that men and women slaves were publicly sold in these fairs like beasts. The condition of merchants must have been truly pitiable in those days. It was not till the year 1303 that foreign merchants were permitted to come and go as they liked, and reside under the protection of the English laws; before then they were obliged to sell their goods within forty days after their arrival.

One of the most useful and creditable transactions of Edward III. was the issue of gold coinage. The coins of England till this period were of silver, chiefly in the form of marks and pennies. A mark was two-thirds of a Tower pound, which was not a real coin, but a pound weight of silver

coins. The king struck florins of gold, which were ordered to pass for six shillings each, and the halves and quarters in proportion. Finding, however, that he had rated these pieces too high, he coined the gold noble of six shillings and eightpence, and recalled the florins to his treasury.

With regard to the music of this period we can only speak historically, for we have no proofs of the actual written music till the fifteenth century. We do, however, know something about the minstrels—we know that they generally composed their own music and sang it; and hence they were the welcome guests at all the great houses. We have said before that every king and great baron kept his train of minstrels, who composed songs, and sang them to their harps at the table. Matilda, queen of Henry I., was so fond of music that she not only expended all her revenues upon them, but oppressed her servants to pay the minstrels.* Rigordus says:—"The courts of princes are filled with crowds of minstrels, who extort from them gold, silver, houses, and vestments, by their flattering songs." The harp was the favourite instrument, but there were others. In a work of the time, quoted by Sir John Hawkins, there are mentioned the following musical instruments—the organ, the harp, the sawtry, the lyre, the cymbal, the sistrum, the trumpet, the flute, the pipe, the tabor, the nakyre, and several others. Hand organs of a rude construction were already known, and to be seen in the streets of cities; but much oftener the pipe, the tabor, the drum, the fiddle, and even the harp, accompanying the feats of dancing-dogs, bears, and monkeys.

There is no nation which has shown such true

* William of Malmsbury.

valour, such admirable courage, as the English; but we are sorry to say that none has shown so little mercy abroad. For example, what could be more dastardly, cruel, and fiendish, than the treatment of David, brother to Llewellyn, the last native king of the Welsh—and of Wallace, regent of Scotland? David was betrayed into the hands of the English, and in the following month Edward I. brought the case of the capture before a parliament, hastily and irregularly summoned at Shrewsbury. Shameful to say, that parliament obsequiously assented to whatever the king described as just and necessary. The consequence was, that they condemned the Welsh prince to be dragged by a horse to the place of execution—to be hung—to have his bowels burnt—to be quartered—and to have his limbs hung up in different places. This disgusting and fiendish sentence was not only carried into effect, but served for many years as a precedent in cases of high treason. Sir William Wallace, one of the bravest men that ever lived, whose valour and magnanimity deserved a very different treatment at the hands of a brave and martial king like the first Edward, was taken to London in chains as a traitor, though he had never acknowledged Edward as his sovereign, and owed him no fealty. Upon the arrival of Wallace in London, crowds assembled to gaze at him. He was conducted on horseback to Westminster, and in Westminster Hall was insulted by being crowned with laurel at the bar, because he had been *reported* to have said that he ought to be crowned there. He was condemned as a traitor, and executed with every circumstance of ignominy at the Elms, in West Smithfield, on the 23rd of August 1305. Thereto he was drawn at the tails of horses; and

after being hanged on the gallows, while he yet breathed his bowels were taken out and burnt before his face. His head was then struck off, his body divided into quarters, and then exposed. A quarter of his body was exposed at Newcastle, another at Berwick, a third at Perth, and the fourth at Aberdeen. So much did the English, in those days, fail to perceive the everlasting infamy attendant on the unworthy treatment of the real nobles of our race—the intrepid defenders of the liberties of their country! Froissart, who does justice to the bravery and virtues of the English, blames them for their insolent and disgusting behaviour to people of other nations. The Scotch appear to have had a similar character.

Anthony Beak, bishop of Durham, merits notice for the singularity of his character. He made a point of always rising immediately after his first sleep—he said "that it was beneath a man to turn himself in bed." Herein we admire the man, but for his other words and deeds we have only a smile. He once gave £40 sterling for forty fresh herrings—at another time he ordered a piece of cloth to be cut into horse-cloths, which cloth had been proverbially said to be "too dear for the bishop of Durham."

At the coronation of Henry III. the people were forbidden to appear in public without a white fillet round their heads in honour of his coronation!

Anne, wife of Richard II., was a woman of most excellent heart, great piety, and a fervent promoter of the Reformation. At her death, Thomas Arundel, bishop of Ely, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, preached a sermon, in which, according to Rapin, he praised the queen for reading the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. And yet this

very Arundel was the first to procure an act for burning heretics; that is, those who read the Bible in English as did queen Anne, and by reading it came to think differently from himself on some points!

"In 1316, on accouut of a great famine, the parliament limited the price of provisions. An ox cost two pounds eight shillings; a fat hog, ten shillings; a sheep, three shillings and sixpence; a fat goose, sevenpence-halfpenny; a fat capon, sixpence; a fat hen, threepence; two chickens, threepence; four pigeons, threepence; two dozen eggs, threepence. The rates affixed by parliament were inferior to the usual market prices, in those years of famine and mortality of cattle; and these commodities, instead of a third, had really risen to a half, of the present value. But the famine at that time was so consuming, that wheat was sometimes sold for above four pounds ten shillings a quarter; a certain proof of the wretched state of agriculture in those ages."* In the next reign, that of Edward III., wheat was three shillings and fourpence per quarter; a fat ox was worth sixteen shillings; a sheep, one shilling and twopence; a hog, three shillings and fourpence; a goose, twopence-halfpenny; a gallon of ale, one penny; a pair of shoes, fourpence; broad cloth, one shilling and fourpence per yard.

The following inventions, &c., date from this period. The mariner's compass, invented by Murphy, a Dutchman. It was greatly improved in the reign of Edward I. by a citizen of Naples, named Flavio de Gioia. Gunpowder, invented by Roger Bacon, but was little known till Schwartz, a monk of Cologne, brought it into use, 1330.

*New Hist. of Great Britain by Adams, p. 121.

Cannons were invented about six years afterwards, and were first used at the battle of Cressy. Booms and mortars were invented about the same time. The art of making paper from rags was brought over to England from the East by some of the crusaders, who also introduced windmills. Leaden pipes were first used. In the reign of Edward III., John Van Eyck, a Dutchman, accidentally discovered that his colours would mix with linseed oil better than with water, hence he was the first who painted in oil. In the reign of Richard II., drafts for money bills of exchange were invented by the Lombards, Italian merchants, who had settled in a place since called Lombard-street, London. In this reign, too, was introduced the fashion of ladies riding on side-saddles, after the example of the Princess Ann of Bohemia.

Edward III. assumed the title of King of France, which our monarchs until lately retained. It was in 1340 that the king took the title, which he used in all public acts, and quartered the arms of France with his own, adding the motto—*Dieu et mon droit.*

Edward I. ordered that when he died his heart should be cut out and sent to Palestine.

Edward II. was the first English king deposed by the people.

In the reign of Henry III. guinea-fowls were introduced into this country from Guinea in Africa.

In Edward II.'s reign the interest of money was as high as forty-five per cent. In the same reign earthenware was introduced.

Edward I. added Wales to England, divided it into twelve counties, and placed a sheriff in each, according to the custom observed in England.

He also formed the chief towns into corporations, made his eldest son "Prince of Wales," and in some measure prevailed upon the Welsh to adopt fixed residences and English customs. Ever since then the eldest son of the royal family has been called the Prince of Wales. In this king's reign, too, the Scotch regalia and crown jewels were brought to England—also the great stone upon which the kings of Scotland sat when they were crowned. The stone was taken from Scone near Perth, and sent to Westminster, where it was framed, and has been used as the coronation chair of England ever since.

In the time of Edward III. the Speaker of the House of Commons was first appointed. The Speaker's business is to sit as president, and keep order, to read the bills, to put the questions to the house, to adjourn it, and so on. The Doctors' Commons and the Heralds' College were erected in this reign. The college of civilians is called the Doctors' Commons, because the students used to "common" or dine together, like the collegians of Oxford and Cambridge. The object of the Heralds' College is to decide all matters pertaining to heraldry. It was in this reign, too, that the *Admiralty Court*, and the Exchequer Chamber Court, were established; the former to decide all maritime controversies, and to try all offences committed on the open sea, and the latter being a court of equity to correct errors made in other courts.

The title of *duke* was introduced by the third Edward. Edward the Black Prince was created by his father "Duke of Cornwall," which title the Prince of Wales has inherited ever since.

Richard II. introduced the title of *marquis*.

The governors of frontier cities and provinces were called marquises. By frontier cities and provinces is meant, cities bordering on an enemy's country—thus, while Scotland and Wales were independent countries, the border towns and lands were called the *marches* of Scotland and Wales. *Marche* is a French word, and means a limit or boundary.

The public officers, the Champion of England, and the Lord High Admiral, were created in the reign of the second Richard. The duty of the Champion of England is this: on the king's coronation day to ride up Westminster Hall on a white horse in full armour, to proclaim the king by his usual titles; he then throws down his gauntlet or iron glove, challenging any one to pick it up and fight with him, who does not believe the monarch to be lawful heir to the crown. The duties of the Lord High Admiral are to take cognizance off all offences committed on the seas, the management of all maritime affairs, and the direction of the royal navy.

Crockery-ware was invented in the time of Edward II.

At the battle of Cressy, the Black Prince slew the King of Bohemia; and having taken off the king's helmet, which had on it three ostrich feathers, and the motto "*Ich dien*"—put it on his own head, and every Prince of Wales has used the same crest ever since.

The police force of the kingdom, during the period under consideration, was far from being good; for we read that when the King of Cyprus paid a visit to England in the reign of Edward III., he was robbed and stripped on the highway—so were his servants.

In the thirteenth century we find mention made of the stocks, to punish unruly people.

The greatest novelty introduced into the civil government during the reign of Richard II., was the creation of peers by patent: Lord Beauchamp of Holt was the first peer advanced to the House of Lords in this manner.

Windsor Castle was built in 1386, by Edward III. His method of conducting the work may serve as a specimen of the condition of the people at that time. Instead of engaging workmen by contracts and wages, he ordered that every county in England should send him a certain number of masons, tilers, and carpenters.

Wat Tyler and his fame deserve notice. Richard II., being a most extravagant man, asked the parliament for more money than they would grant him; the result was the fatal capitation-tax, which threw the whole country into a convulsion. This was a tax of three groats per head on every male and female above fifteen years of age. This poll-tax was the drop to the full cup. The people were already writhing under the continued exactions for the French wars, &c., and this tax drove them to desperation. One of the collectors of the tax at Dartford, in Kent, went to the house of one Wat Tyler, or Walter the Tyler, and demanded the tax for a daughter of Wat, whom the mother contended was under fifteen, the age fixed by law. The insolent tax-gatherer declared he would prove that; and was proceeding to the grossest outrage, when Wat came running in at the outcries of his wife and daughter, and knocked out the scoundrel's brains with his hammer. The neighbours applauded Wat's courage, and vowed to stand by him;—

"for," says the chronicler, "the rude officers had in many places made the like trial." The news spread like lightning, and very soon he was at the head of 100,000 men. The issue of the rising is well known: relying on the promises and oaths of a weak king and a perfidious court, their leader was slain by Sir William Walworth, and the people dispersed. Yet the demands of the rebels (as they are called) are curious and worthy of note:—Abolition of slavery; freedom of commerce in market-towns, without tolls or imposts; fixed rents, instead of the old service rendered by the tenant to his landlord; and, finally, the expulsion of the Flemings.

There was a very great improvement in the condition of the people in this period compared with the last. One of the laws that tended to improvement was, that every man who could contrive to live a year and a day in any town, became a freeman.

The House of Commons dates its origin from this period. In the year 1295, in the twenty-third year of Edward I., parliaments first began to meet regularly, and they have continued to do so ever since. Our first M.Ps. did not like the office—many even avoided it. The greater part of them, being rude in manner and speech, knew they would be scorned and insulted by the proud aristocracy. The contempt with which they were treated by the vain lords compelled them to sit apart, and this was the deciding cause of their becoming a distinct house—the *House of Commons*. The democracy—the commons of England—made slow but unmistakable progress. Every opportunity was seized by the people to enlarge and increase their political power. Though in the House

of Commons there is much room for improvement even now; yet, in about four and a half centuries, it has risen to the noblest position of any senate the world ever saw.

Such is a picture of the people of England in the fourteenth century. In arms they had won eternal and unrivalled fame; in poetry, literature, and art, they had made brilliant advances. Their churches were piles of glorious architecture; in poetry, they had a Chaucer; in architecture, a Wykeham; in philosophy, a Bacon and a Grosteste; Wycliffe had made the Bible common property, infusing new life into religion, which penetrated the cottage and the dwelling of the industrious citizen. In the constitution, the Great Charter had been confirmed, as well as many excellent statutes, restraining the royal and baronial power, and extending that of the people. Gunpowder and cannon had been employed in warfare, making strong castles useless. Manufactures had been introduced by the noble queen Philippa of Hainault. Gardens of culinary vegetables, of medicinal herbs, and of flowers, as well as *pomaria*, or orchards, became general. Vineyards were neglected, and were running to waste. As a whole, it must be pronounced a distinguished and progressive era, which did its duty to the common country and to posterity, but fell short in the two important domains of morals and of humanity.*

* William Howitt.

CHAPTER V.

Manners and Customs of the English from 1399 to 1485; during the reigns of Henry IV., Henry V., Henry VI., Edward IV., Edward V., and Richard III.

A WELL-KNOWN writer has truly said:—"When a country continues to be inhabited by the same people, living under the same government, professing the same religion, and speaking the same language, as the people of Britain did at this period, the changes in their manners, customs, virtues, vices, language, dress, diet, and diversions, are slow, and almost imperceptible. These changes are, however, like the motion of the shadow on the sundial, real, and in process of time become conspicuous. If the heroic Henry V. were now to rise from the dead, and appear in the streets of London, mounted on his war-horse, and clothed in complete armour, what astonishment would he excite in the admiring multitude! How much would he be surprised at every object around him? If he were conducted to St. Paul's, he would neither know the church nor understand the service; he would believe himself to be in a city and amongst a people that he had never seen."*

The English people of the period under consideration were very different from those described in the last chapter. The invention of printing, the progress of new ideas in religious and political doctrines, the gradual abolition of villanage, were preparing for them the most complete revolution

* Pic. Hist. of England.

of mind and manners the world had ever witnessed. The introduction of Greek literature, the promulgation of the great, grand, and noble principles of the Scriptures, and the spreading of knowledge among the people, were destined inevitably to produce an enlarged and exalted standard of feeling and opinion, and to work a thorough change in the ideas of England. In the last chapter we observed, that the morality of the clergy and the people was very loose; we find it still looser in the fifteenth century. To what cause are we to attribute this declension? To what but the decline of chivalry? The causes just mentioned were yet too recent to have produced much effect on morals and manners. Chivalry, one of the most remarkable characteristics of the middle ages, began to decline in the fifteenth century; people of all ranks were then too seriously engaged in real combats to give much attention to the sham fights in the lists, or gaudy bravery of the tournament. Caxton exclaimed—"The days of chivalry are gone! Oh, ye knyghtes of Englande, where is the custome and usage of noble chyvalry that was used in those days? What do ye now but go to the baynes and play at dyse? How many knyghtes ben ther now in England, that have thuse and thexercise of a knyghte? That is to wite, that he knoweth his horse and his horse him." And honest William Caxton hoped, by the reading of romances which he printed in the little chapelry at Westminster, to reawaken in their hearts the dying fires of chivalry. "Leve this, leve it, and rede the noble volumes of St. Graal, of Lancelot, of Galaad, of Trystram, of Perse Forest, of Percyval, of Gawayn, and many mor: ther shall ye see manhode, curtosye, and gentyl-

ness." Vain hope! the light of chivalry waned and died out, never again to be rekindled in this world.

But though the spirit of chivalry was gone for ever, the forms of it yet remained; and tournaments were still celebrated when actual war did not offer more serious opportunities for the exercise of arms. Henry V. of England, and James I. of Scotland, were renowned for their skill in tilting, as well as for all knightly arts. Kings still granted royal protections to foreign princes and nobles to come hither and joust with our knights. Occasionally, too, there were great tournaments, in which as many as thirty or forty knights assembled on either side, and attacked each other with spear and battle-axe, till the joust became a real battle.

The great barons still kept up a sort of rude state, with great retinues of soldiers and serving-men in their halls and castles, which yet frowned with watchtowers and portcullises; and from whose ramparts grim warders looked down upon draw-bridge, and moat, and guarded outposts. The time had not yet arrived when they could dispense with privy counsellors, marshals, treasurers, stewards, secretaries, heralds, seneschals, pursuivants, pages, guards, and trumpeters. They still retained their bands of minstrels, their jesters, their buffoons, their tumblers, and all sorts of ministers to their amusement. In their style of living there was a rude abundance and prodigality, which was far from refined. They had four meals in the day: breakfast at seven, dinner at ten, supper at four in the afternoon, and a meal called the "livery," which was taken just before going to bed. The common people were much later in their hours of

of eating. They breakfasted at eight, dined at twelve, and supped at six. The fashionable hours of the present day are almost precisely those of the "common people" then, if we call the twelve o'clock dinner a luncheon, and the supper at six a dinner. So does one age reverse the habits of another!

The accounts which have come down to us of supplies of the tables of the nobility in this century, as presented in the "Household Book of the Percys," is something startling. The breakfast of the Earl and Countess of Northumberland was, "first, a loaf of bread in trenchers, two manchetts, a quart of beer, a quart of wine, half a chyne of mutton, or a chyne of beef boiled." The livery, or evening collation for the lord and lady, was equally abundant; having dined and supped, be it remembered, "first, two manchetts, a loaf of household bread, a gallon of beer, and a quart of wine," which was warmed and spiced. Though we cannot suppose them to have got through half this quantity, the whole history of the age shows that the higher classes were addicted to profuse, if not what we should in this day call good, living. The dinner-tables of the rich were loaded with huge pewter dishes filled with salted beef, mutton, and butchers' meat of all kinds; venison, poultry, sea-fowls, wild-boar, wild-fowls, game, fish, &c.; and they were, moreover, luxurious in pies and baked meats of many sorts. The sideboards were plentifully furnished with ale, beer, and the wines of Spain and France, which were handed to the guests as often as called for, in silver, pewter, or wooden cups, by the marshals, grooms, yeomen, and waiters of the chamber, who were ranged in regular order of precedence behind the master

of the house and his guests. Yet amid all this show and profusion, the lords, no less than the servitors, used their fingers instead of forks, which were not yet invented. Though they sat down to dinner at ten in the forenoon, yet they seldom rose till one, thus spending three of the best hours of the day in sheer gormandizing. Meantime, the company was entertained by the songs and harps of the minstrels, the jests of the fool, the tricks of jugglers, and the tumbling and capering of dancers. After each course came in what they called *suttleties*—figures in pastry representing men, women, beasts, birds, &c., set on the table to be admired, but not to be touched; each figure had attached to it a label, containing some witty or wise saying, whence their name.

The monks and secular clergy are reported to have been especial lovers of the table. The monks in rich monasteries lived even more fully and richly than any order of men in the kingdom. The cook was usually one of the brethren who, for his knowledge of the *cuisine*, was elevated to that office, and was held in high honour. The historian of Croyland speaks in raptures of brother Lawrence Chateres, the cook of that monastery, who, "prompted by the love of God and zeal for religion, had given £40—£400 of our money—for the recreation of the convent with the milk of almonds on fish-days." Almonds, milk of almonds, sugar, honey, and spices, appear to have been plentiful in these monkish refectories, and these dainties were often adorned with gold-leaf, powder of gold, and brilliant pigments.

The secular clergy celebrated in the churches five times in the year what they plainly called "glutton-masses." Early in the morning the

people flocked in, bringing all sorts of roasted and boiled meats, substantial viands, and strong drinks, and, as soon as the mass was ended, they all fell to in right earnest, and finished the day in unbounded riot and intemperance, till the feast degenerated into an orgie. The clergy and people of different parishes vied with each other in their endeavours to have the greatest glutton-mass, and to devour the greatest quantity of meat and drink in honour of the Holy Virgin! *

The hospitality of all ranks, but particularly the wealthy, was at this period sufficiently remarkable. The castles of the powerful barons were capacious palaces, daily crowded with numerous retainers, who were welcome to their plentiful tables. "Neville, Earl of Warwick, was ever held in great favour by the commons of the land, on account of his hospitality in all places wherever he went; and, when he came to London, he kept such an house, that six oxen were eaten at a breakfast, and every tavern was full of his meat; for who that had any acquaintance in that house, he should have as much sodden and roast as he might carry upon a long dagger." † No fewer than 30,000 people are said to have lived daily at this earl's expense in his different manors and castles. It is probable that such men as Warwick kept a multitude of retainers, not so much through real generosity, as through a desire of increasing the number and attachment of their followers, on which, in those turbulent times, their dignity and even their very safety depended. Though these retainers did not constantly reside with the families of their lords, yet they wore their liveries and

* Howitt's Priests and Priestcraft.
† Stowe.

badges, feasted in their halls, swelled their retinues on all great occasions, attended them on their journeyings, and followed them into the field of battle. So great was the number of retainers who acknowledged fealty to some great chieftains, that they set the laws at defiance, became formidable to their king, and terrible to their fellow subjects.

The English were remarkable in this period, among the nations of Europe, for the absurd practice of swearing in conversation. The Count of Luxemburg, accompanied by the Earls of Warwick and Stafford, visited the Maid of Orleans in her prison at Rouen, where she was chained to the floor, and loaded with irons. The Count, who had sold her to the English, pretended that he had come to treat with her about her ransom. Viewing him with just resentment and disdain, she cried—"*Begone!* You have neither the inclination nor the power to ransom me." Then turning her eyes towards the two earls, she said—"I know that you English are determined to put me to death, and imagine, that after I am dead you will conquer France. But though there were an hundred thousand of your swearing countrymen in France, they will never conquer that kingdom." A contemporary historian, who had frequently conversed with Henry VI., mentions it as a commendable singularity in his character, that he did not swear in common conversation, but reproved his ministers and officers of state for so odious an habit, which, much to our honour, is now almost universally reprobated, and quite banished from every polite company.*

Great was the extravagance in dress during this century, though not so great as in that which

*Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, p. 147.

immediately preceded it. In the fourth year of Henry IV.'s reign it was found necessary to revive the sumptuary laws enacted by his predecessors, but they were practically disregarded. "No man not being a banneret, or person of high estate," was permitted to wear cloth of gold, of crimson, or cloth of velvet, or motley velvet, or large hanging sleeves open or closed, or gowns so long as to touch the ground, or to use the furs of ermine, lettice, or marten, excepting only "gens d'armes quant ills sont armez." Decorations of gold and silver were forbidden to all who possessed less than £200 in goods and chattels, or twenty pounds per annum, unless they were heirs to estates of fifty marks per annum, or to five hundred pounds' worth of goods and chattels. Four years afterwards it was ordained that no man, let his condition be what it might, should be permitted to wear a gown or garment cut or slashed into pieces in the form of letters, rose leaves, and posies of various kinds, or any such-like devices, under the penalty of forfeiting the same. And, in order to more fully carry out this edict, it was ordered that the offending tailor who made such garments should be imprisoned during the king's pleasure. But that these statutes were little regarded, is proved by the complaints of *Occleve* the poet, from whose poem of "Pride and Waste-clothing of Lorde's Men, which is azens [against] their Estate,"—we quote two stanzas, somewhat modernizing the spelling—

> "Who now most may bear on his back at once,
> Of cloth and furrour (furs) hath a fresh renown,
> He is a lusty man clepyd for the nones:
> Now have these lords little need of brooms
> To sweep away the filth out of the street,
> Since side sleeves of pennyless grooms
> Will it up lick, be it dry or wet.

"If a wight virtuous, but narrow clothed,
To lords' courts now-a-days go,
His company is to myk (many) folk lothed.
Men pass by him both to and fro,
And scorn him for he is arrayed so;
To their conceit there is no wight virtuous
But he whose array is outrageous." *

In 1463, two years after the ascension of Edward IV., an act was passed prohibiting any one making or wearing shoes or boots with pikes exceeding *two inches!* But in that reign, as if to show their contempt of the law, nobles, rich men, and even burghers, wore shoes in which the points were more ridiculously long than ever. As no notice was taken of the law, the power of the church was called in, and the wearers of the prohibited boots and shoes were excommunicated. Holy, pure, just, and infallible church, to send a man to perdition rather than allow him to wear long-pointed shoes! But neither the law nor the church could control the fashion. Towards the end of the fourth Edward's reign, shoes and boots began to be made and worn almost as wide as they were long; so another act was passed, forbidding them to be worn more than *six inches* broad at the toe. It was not, however, till the reign of Henry VII. that the long-toed shoes and boots went out of fashion.

The lower garments of gentlemen during this period, were all of one piece from the foot to the waist. There were no separate stockings and pantaloons. This dress fitted as tight to their limbs as possible. Their upper garments were of various kinds and shapes. In Henry IV.'s reign, caps were generally turned up at the sides, some more, some less, a good deal resembling turbans.

* Quoted by Planché in his Hist. of British Costume.

The elder gentlemen much affected a close-fitting gown or coat, with skirts reaching to the feet. It was buttoned down the front, and had a row of similar buttons under each sleeve from the elbow. Their broad hats were turned up behind, and beneath them they wore a hood, which enclosed both head, neck, and shoulders, like a cape. The younger men wore tunics fitting the body, belted at the waist, and with skirts terminating at the knee. The sleeves were wide, but not so long as in the preceding or succeeding reign.

The dress of the ladies of Henry IV.'s time was remarkable for a very singular gown, open at the sides, and showing the dress beneath, called the sideless gown; also for a peculiar and ludicrous style of immense head-gear. To such a preposterous extent was this head-dress carried in France, that it is said—we suppose in jest—that the doors of the palace of Vincennes were obliged to be both heightened and widened to admit Isabella of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI., and the ladies of her suite. The ladies also wore exceedingly rich and beautiful girdles, which hung down to a great length in front, as may be seen in all the effigies of the Countess of Arundel, Lady de Thorpe, the Countess of Westmoreland, and others in "Stothard's Effigies." The collar of SS, or Esses, made its appearance in this reign as a badge of honour. We know not its origin, but think with Meyrick, that it was perhaps from the motto of the fourth Henry whilst Earl of Derby—"Souveraine."

In the reign of Henry V. the tunics of the men became shorter, and the sleeves immensely longer, till they actually swept the ground. These sleeves were sometimes fancifully indented on the

edges, or cut in the form of leaves. In all this century beards were close shaven, except by men of mature age. The ladies of this reign continued, and even exaggerated, the stupendous head-gear alluded to. They actually wore horns, on which they hung their veils and ribbons. From the horn on the right side a streamer of silk or other light fabric was hung, which was sometimes allowed to fly loose, and sometimes brought over the bosom, and wrapped over the left arm. The gown or robe was worn about the same length and fulness as in the last reign; and in the dresses of those ladies who patronised rich girdles, the waist was somewhat shorter than before.

The reign of Henry VI. was not marked by any great change of costume; but the dresses of both males and females were much trimmed with fur, and long tippets frequently depended from the hat to the ground. The hair was cut short, and caps or hats of fantastic shapes were worn sometimes with a single long feather. The long-toed shoes reappeared. Ladies head-dresses had decreased in width, but many of them had risen in height. Some were horned, or heart-shaped, and others were turbans of the genuine Turkish fashion. Tippets, or veils, were attached to the preposterous head-dresses. The gowns of the ladies had enormous trains, with waists extremely short, and tightly girded. A writer says that "serving-women" put fur not only on their collars, but on the bottoms of their dresses, which fell about their heels and draggled in the mire.

In Edward IV.'s reign the toes of shoes were longer, and the doublets or tunics shorter, than ever: only lords were allowed to wear those "indecently short dresses;" but the law was

ignored on all sides. Caps of cloth assumed very much the shape of hats; and the hair was not only worn long, but brought down upon the forehead almost into the eyes. All gentlemen wore chains of gold of the most massive kind; and about this time large jack or top-boots began to be worn. Of all the head-dresses ever introduced in the wildest vagaries of fashion, those of the ladies of this reign were the most preposterous and amusing. The horns now rose up from the cap or bonnet, enclosing it from behind, and rearing their lofty points into the air, like those of some wild bison: these were covered with some richly-patterned silk or velvet. Others had round tower-like bonnets, with battlemented tops, and huge transparent shades, enclosing the face, and running to a point half a yard before and behind them. Others, again, had conical frames half a yard high set upon their heads, covered with lace or velvet. These had frequently a large wing on each side, like those of butterflies, and from the top fell a piece of fine lawn, often quite to the ground. These preposterous caps became so much the rage, that the peasant women of Normandy, especially in the Boccage, still wear a head-dress of this fashion: they tower aloft in the market-places, white as snow, with their butterfly wings generally tied over the front.

In the costumes of the short reign of Richard III., the gentlemen appear again in top-boots, with spurs, and enormous long toes. They wore long tight hose, fastened to the doublet with laces or points, as they were called. The doublet was open in front, showing a stomacher, and over this was worn a short loose gown, plaited before and behind, with full slashed sleeves. These gowns

and doublets were of the richest and most brilliant velvets and satins. On the head was a small cap, generally round and closely fitting, with a roll of fur round it, or turned up at the side with a feather, jewelled up the stem. The hair was worn thick and bushy behind. The ladies, in some measure, discarded the steeple caps, and wore the hair thrown backwards, in a caul of gold, and over it a kerchief of the finest texture, stiffened out and descending to the back. Some of these kerchiefs were very large. Their gowns were as before, with turn-over collars and cuffs of fur or velvet.

The armour through this period was of solid plate, varied in every reign in too many small particulars to be here enumerated. Warriors sometimes slept in their armour, and the people in their day-clothes*—not a very comfortable way of resting the wearied body, as it would seem to us.

The sports and pastimes of this age were very similar to those of the preceding century. Besides jousts and tournaments, the English were keen followers of the sports of the field. But in their in-door amusements they exhibited most exemplary patience. They were accustomed to sit hours, and even successive days, it is said, over what appear to us very dull plays, both sacred and profane, called mysteries, moralities, and miracles. They also patronised various kinds of public pageants, attended by every species of minstrels, jugglers, mummers, rope-dancers, and mountebanks. The more simple and healthy sports of the commonalty were foot-ball, trap-ball, and hand-ball, in which indeed the aristocracy often excelled; playing, on horseback as well as on foot, for large stakes.

* Planché—Howitt—and others.

They had a large kind of leather ball, probably filled with air, which they propelled sometimes by bats, and sometimes merely with the hand. In Scotland, when James I. was anxious to introduce archery, he forbade foot-ball, quoits, and similar popular games, as well as a game which was called "cloish, kayles, half-bowl, handin-handout, and quickeaborde." Card-playing was still checked by the high price of a pack of cards, which cost no less than eighteen shillings and eightpence in Paris, or upwards of £9 of our present money. In 1463, the English card-makers obtained an act of parliament to exclude foreign cards. The cause of their high price lay in their richly-gilded and painted figures.*

In architecture, in music, and in painting, the church of Rome, however it might fail in spirit and doctrine, acquitted itself royally towards the public during this period, as well as at other times. The remains of painted windows—to say nothing of the productions of such men as Raphael, Michael Angelo, and many others—are sufficient to excite our highest admiration. Indeed the ecclesiastics of all ages have been generous and munificent patrons of art. Gothic architecture continued to be gradually improved, and in the course of this period attained its nearest approach to perfection. The wealthy no longer lived in moated castles, but began to inhabit large rambling mansions, constructed of timber, and covered with plaster. The large houses were generally built round one or two quadrangles, and often possessed a great variety of exterior detail; within, the great hall with its open groined roof, the kitchen, and the buttery, cut the principal figure.

* Pic. Hist. of Eng.—Vol. II., page 68.

At the upper end of the hall was the *dais* or raised floor, on which stood the table of the lord and his family, and principal guests; and below the great salt-cellar sat the remainder of the establishment. Gentlemen sat on wooden benches, and ladies on low stools. At the lower end there was generally a music gallery. The fireplace was usually situated in the centre of the hall, and in the roof was a hole to permit the smoke to escape; chimneys were not yet in general use. The floors were strewn with rushes as of old, instead of carpets. Overhead were perches for hawks; the floor was crowded with dogs, gnawing the bones thrown to them by the guests. The walls were hung with arras, which concealed their roughness, and at the same time kept out cold. Plaster ceilings were still unknown. The greater part of these houses, however, was required for the sleeping apartments of the numerous retainers, which were not very clean or comfortable in the fifteenth century. The beds were usually straw pallets, each covered with a sheet, with a log of wood for a bolster, and a horse-cloth for a coverlet! In farm-houses and similar buildings, the same plan of building round a quadrangle was adhered to. A great number of such buildings were of framed timber, with ornamental gables and porches, and displaying much curious carving. Great Chatfield manor-house in Wiltshire, Harlaxton in Lincolnshire, and some others, in whole or in part, date from this period. In towns, the houses were also chiefly of wood. The streets were very narrow, and the upper stories of the houses projected over the lower ones, so that from the windows of the upper story people could almost shake hands. Many of the small houses in narrow streets were adorned with an

abundance of carving. The houses or inns of the great barons, prelates, and abbots, were very extensive, and surrounded inner courts. So extensive were some of them, that a thousand men could be accommodated. From all that we can learn, the poorer people of this age were but indifferently housed; indeed, the dwellings of the rich were more stately than comfortable.

At this period, two events of great importance to learning and art occurred: the invention of printing, and the introduction of Greek literature. At the time Greek began to be studied, the knowledge of Latin was very low; though it still continued to be the language of divines, lawyers, philosophers, historians, and even poets, yet it had lost almost all traces of its original idiom and elegance. Latin words were used, but in the English order, and when words were wanting they Anglicised them. For example, William of Worcester, speaking of the arrival of the Duke of York from Ireland, says—"et arrivavit apud Redbanke, prope Cestriam," that is, and arrived at Redbanke, near Chester. Literature was not much encouraged.

"The best scholars in the kingdom were often driven to the necessity of begging their bread from door to door, with a recommendation from the chancellor of their university to public charity." * Wood also tells us, that two of these learned mendicants came to the castle of a certain nobleman, who, understanding from their credentials, that they had a taste for poetry, commanded his servants to take them to a well; to put each of them into a bucket, and let them down alternately into the water, and to continue that exercise till each

* Wood—quoted by William Howitt in his Pic. Hist. of England.

of them had made a couplet on his bucket. After they had endured this discipline for a considerable time, to the great entertainment of the baron and his family, they made their verses and obtained their liberty. This ancedote gives an idea of the mental darkness in the fifteenth century. If the scholars were so treated by an aristocrat, what must have been the state of the people? Until the reign of Henry IV., no villein, farmer, or manufacturer was allowed to send his children to school, nor for long afterwards dared they educate a son for the church, without first obtaining a licence from their lords.

But the time was coming for the removal of these mental clouds. The Chinese had printed from engraved wooden blocks for many centuries, when the same idea suggested itself to Coster or Faust. Coster first cut his letters in wood, then made separate wooden letters, and employed them in printing books by tying them together with strings. From wood he proceeded to cut his letters in metal, and finally to cut them in the present fashion. He did his best to keep his process a secret from every one except his children; but Gutenberg, one of his assistants, went off to Mayence, taking with him Coster's moveable types. This is the story of the Dutch with regard to the invention of printing. The Germans tell a very different tale. They insist on Gutenberg being the originator of printing; and that Holland had no share whatever in the invention. It is well known, however, that all the earliest block printing was performed in the Low Countries during the period under consideration. Some say that printing was invented in the year 1430, in the reign of Henry VI., by John Gensfleisch. About

greatest foe—freedom and democracy their mightiest alley—on the day when Gutenberg, Schœffer, and Faust were first "inspired by the devil" to invent and practise that black art. The clergy of that day declared that printing was an invention of the devil—Mr. Langford shrewdly asks, "Were these men wise in their generation? and did they foresee an end of their power in the mystic types of the press?"

It would be almost vain to look for one divine, physician, or philosopher, who proved a glory to England during this period. The best writers are not our own countrymen, but Frenchmen; Froissart, Ordericus, and a few others, give us a better account of our own affairs than any of our own writers living at this period.*

The English, at this time, were divided into three religious parties: the church, which was for standing as it was, unmoved and unmoving for ever; the Lollards, who were for pulling down the church, stick and stone; and another large section of the public, which saw the corruption of the church and demanded its reform, but did not quite agree with the Lollards in the cry for its destruction. Our kings then stood in need of the aid of the church; so the hierarchy was allowed to let loose its fury on the poor Lollards. To oblige the churchmen, Henry IV. consented to the passing of the first law for the burning of heretics; that is to say, persons who dared to differ in opinion from the religion of the state. In accordance with this barbarous act, William Sawtre, minister of Lynn in Norfolk, and afterwards the minister of St. Osith's in London, and the first English martyr, was burnt at the stake on the 10th of March, 1401.

* See the new edition of "Ordericus," published by H. G. Bohn.

In 1415, John Claydon, a London farrier, and a "stubborn heretic," after having been confined for five years, was burnt for having in his possession heretical books, especially one called "The Lanterne of Light." Sir John Oldcastle, a follower of Wycliffe, was the first nobleman who suffered martyrdom for his religious opinions. He was roasted alive in St. Giles's fields by the priests of the infallible Roman church . . . . Scores of people were put to death; but, nevertheless, Lollardism increased. The more honest men were persecuted for their religious opinions, the more they embraced the opinions of good old reformer Wycliffe. The morality of the priesthood was as low as it could well be; notwithstanding which, they claimed credit for much learning and piety. Archbishop Bouchier, while putting the reformers to the most terrible of deaths, complained that numbers of "the clergy, both regular and secular, were ignorant and illiterate blockheads, or rather idiots;" and that they were "as profligate as they were ignorant, neglecting their cures, strolling about the country with bad women, and spending the revenues of their benefices in feasting, drinking, and adultery." Whilst the clergy were exhibiting these disgraceful characteristics, all the outward rites and ceremonies of the church were dogmatically insisted upon. The sacramental cup was denied to all but those of their own persuasion and practice; the people were told that the wine in the cup was not the sacrament, but was given merely to enable them to swallow the bread more easily, and religion was abused by many like absurdities.

Great stress was laid on the efficacy of pilgrimages, processions, plenary indulgences, confessions

to priests, and ecclesiastical pardons. George Neville, archbishop of York, reckoned as many as thirty-seven kinds of sin, which none but the pope or one of his bishops could pardon. Heresy was considered the first and greatest sin—the least was the raising seditions which might endanger a city or state!

A convocation held at York in 1466, in its first canon ordered that every parish priest should preach *four times in the year*, either himself or by another! To be brief, it would be difficult to say whether ignorance or vice most prevailed during the dark ages immediately preceding the Reformation.

In the reign of Henry V., a ship, 186 feet in length, was built at Bayonne for the king, who claimed the credit of having established a permanent navy! Before his reign, kings occasionally assembled large fleets, but they consisted of vessels either belonging to merchants of different English ports, or hired of foreign countries. Foreign merchants were, according to law, compelled to lay out in English merchandise all the money they received for goods imported into this country. No gold or silver coin, plate or bullion, was on any account to be carried out of the kingdom. Merchants were to sell all the goods they brought to our ports within three months; but they were not to sell any of them to other merchant strangers. When they arrived in an English town they were assigned to particular hosts, and were allowed to lodge nowhere else. These facts prove how ignorant were our forefathers with respect to commerce and shipping. In most European countries banks were established about this period. Wool, tin, and corn, were still our chief

exports, and slaves ceased to be considered chattels or articles of commerce.

One of the most remarkable merchants of this time was Sir Richard Whittington, "thrice lord mayor of London." He lived in the reign of Henry V., and his history is purely legendary. Of his mode of trading nothing is positively known but the fact that he did trade and grew rich. Some say that he acquired great wealth by trading in a vessel called the *Cat*, whence arose the story of his remarkable adventures; others inform us that, so far from being a poor boy and making his fortune by a cat, he was the son of Sir William Whittington, knight. Certain it is, however, that he left his mark upon the age in which he lived, and bequeathed to posterity a good name.

Music made much progress in this age. Henry V. was an ardent patron and admirer of it, and not only played well himself on the harp, but had a regular military band which attended him in France, and played for an hour every morning and evening before his tent. Church music was at this time carefully taught at the universities. James I. is said to have been an exquisite musician, and to have introduced a plaintive but touching style of modulation. The plaintive character of Scottish ballad music may indeed be partly derived from this monarch.

The military arts were extensively and industriously practised during this period, through the wars with France, and the "Wars of the Roses;" and many improvements were made in the manner of raising, forming, paying, and disciplining troops. The fifth Henry was, as far as his light went, a master of this art, and was, perhaps, the first English king who introduced a regular scheme of dis-

cipline in the English army. He taught his troops to march in straight lines at proper distances, with a steady, measured pace; to advance, attack, halt, or fall back without breaking ranks, or getting into confusion. As a consequence of this improvement in discipline, at the battles of Agincourt, Cressy, Poictiers, &c., the English evinced the most invincible steadiness and courage. The destruction caused by the famous English archers was immense; whenever they fought they made themselves masters of the field, and all the great battles of this time were won by their agency. Though gunpowder was invented, it was not much used; the soldiers of those times preferred arms to which they had been accustomed to new ones, of which they had little knowledge. Cannons were first used in England at the siege of Berwick in 1405. Some of the cannons were very large, and discharged balls of five hundred pounds weight. They are said to have required fifty horses to draw them. But others were not much heavier than a musket. Most of the early cannon-balls were made of stone. Henry V. once ordered two officers to press into his service a sufficient number of masons to make seven thousand balls in the quarries of Maidstone-heath. But the art of constructing balls of iron, and discharging them red-hot from cannons, was known and practised at a comparatively early period.

A lasting reproach to the English of this period is their cruel treatment of that true heroine, Joan of Arc, whose story is too well known to need repetition in these pages.

In this epoch occurred those civil commotions known in history as "the Wars of York and Lancaster," or "the Wars of the two Roses." William

Howitt, in speaking of the civil wars in the reign of Edward IV., says: "This civil war was now known all over the world as the War of the Roses, a name said to be derived from a circumstance which took place in a dispute in the Temple Gardens betwixt Warwick and Somerset, at an early period of the rival factions. Somerset, in order to collect the suffrages of those on the side of Lancaster, is said to have plucked a red rose from a bush, and to have called upon every man who held with him to do the like. Warwick, for York, plucked a white rose, and thus the partisans were distinguishable by these differing badges. But in truth these badges were the badges of the two houses as far back as Edward I. Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, brother of that king, wore the red rose, and the Black Prince the white. They were now adopted universally by the followers of the two houses, and rosettes of red or white ribbon, or even of paper, were worn by all the soldiers of these wars, red for Lancaster, white for York. They were soon to be equally dyed in a crimson torrent such as had yet rarely flowed in all the wars of England."

Shakespeare has plainly averred that Henry IV. was an usurper; and that the House of York had the best title to the throne.* These disastrous civil wars lasted sixteen years. Thirteen battles were fought, thousands of people lost their lives, and the houses of York and Lancaster were not united till Henry VII. married Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the fourth Edward.

The title of Sir was formerly given to clergymen who had obtained an university degree; and it is

* King Henry VI., Part II., Act II., Scene 2

still retained on the rolls of the English universities.

In the reign of Edward IV. a tradesman was executed for saying that his son was "heir to the crown," by which he meant, simply the sign of his house. Robert Byfield, sheriff of London, was fined for kneeling too near the king! In the reign of Richard III., Sir William Collingburn was executed on a charge of treason; but in reality it was for daring to say, that "The Rat, the Cat, and Lovel, our dog, rule all England under a Hog," alluding to Sir Richard *Rat*cliffe, Sir William *Cat*esby, the arms of Viscount Lovel, namely, a *dog*, and those of the king, which were a wild *boar*. What liberty of speech was allowed to the English of the fifteenth century, this anecdote will best show!

Henry IV. had the sword which he wore on landing at Ravenspur, borne naked and erect before him at his coronation, by the Earl of Northumberland—thus asserting his title as of the sword; and he conferred the Isle of Man on the earl, in fee "for himself and his heirs, for the service of carrying this sword at the present and all future coronations." But not content with distinctly announcing that he intended to defend by the sword the crown which he had won by it, he also introduced an additional incident, which would nowadays be considered highly absurd, but which then, no doubt, was calculated to make a great impression on the ignorant and superstitious populace. He had the coronation oil carried in a vessel of stone, with a cover of gold set with diamonds, which it was announced was brought from heaven by the Virgin Mary, and delivered to Thomas à Becket, with an assurance that the

kings anointed with that oil would be great and victorious princes, and zealous champions of the church." *

It was about this time that Henry IV. instituted the order of knighthood called "Knights of the Bath"—a military order consisting of forty-six esquires. They were so called because they were required to bathe before creation—to intimate that their minds and intentions were "pure and loyal." From the reign of Charles II. to that of George I., this order was held in abeyance; but since the time of the first George it has become the most common honorary reward of military officers and distinguished civilians.

In the reign of Henry V., the Guildhall in London was completed. In it were held all the corporation courts—such as the mayor's court, the sheriff's court, the common council-men's court, &c., and in it are still held various law courts. *Guild* means a company or corporation, and is derived from the Saxon word *guildan*, to pay. Every member paid something towards the general expenses, hence its name.

Engraving and etching were invented, and plaster of Paris first brought into use in the reign of Henry VI. Etching and wood-engraving were invented by Albert Durer, a German; copper-plate engraving was invented by Lucas, a Dutchman; plaster of Paris is a chalky stone, found in the neighbourhood of Paris, burnt and reduced to powder. In the same reign, water-pumps and the manufacture of glass were introduced into England from foreign countries. Ctesebes, an Athenian, invented water-pumps 150 B.C.; but the invention was not known in England till this time. Glass is

* Pic. Hist. of Eng.—Vol. I., p. 482.

said to have been invented thus: Some Syrian merchants who, being shipwrecked, gathered a heap of sea-weed to make a fire, and the weed, mixing with the sand, produced glass. This occurred B.C. 209. The French learned the manufacture of glass from the Italians, and the English from the French. Dr. Johnson's well-known account of the discovery of glass has preserved this anecdote in choice English.

In the reign of the sixth Henry, the title of viscount was first adopted in England. This title of honour was a degree below that of count or earl. Lord John Beaumont was the first English viscount. The Lord Mayor's show, on the fifth of November, had its origin in this reign. In outward ceremonial it has varied little from the first year of its introduction.

The national debt—that is, money borrowed by the government upon parliamentary security—commenced in the reign of Henry VI., but it remained insignificant in amount till the reign of William III. It reached its culminating point in the time of the third George.

In the reign of Edward IV. watches were invented by Peter Hale, a German mechanic, and violins by an Italian; but watches were not introduced into England till the reign of Elizabeth, nor violins till the time of Charles II. In the same reign, yew-trees were ordered to be cultivated in churchyards, for the making of bows, for which purpose the wood was particularly well adapted.

In the reign of Crookback, the inundation of the Severn was so great, that for one hundred years after it was called the Great Flood, or Buckingham's Flood. The tops of the surrounding

hills are said to have been covered, and many houses and cattle are said to have been carried away in its course.

Post-horses and stages, or regular resting-places, date their origin from the time of Richard III. In our own day stage-coaches have been nearly superseded by railways.

To show the superstition of those times, mention may be made of a charge of sorcery against the Duchess of Gloucester. She was accused of high treason; "for that she, by sorcery and enchantment, intended to destroy the king, to the intent to advance and promote her husband to the crown." Beside the duchess and Bolingbroke, there were arrested as accomplices, Southwell, a canon of St. Paul's, Hum, a priest, and Marjory Jourdemain, a witch. Many charges were brought against the duchess—one of the most terrible and absurd was, that she had procured from Southwell and Bolingbroke a wax figure, which was so moulded by art, that when placed before the fire, as it melted away the flesh of the king would melt away also, his marrow dry up, and his health fade. Eight-and-twenty such charges were preferred against Dame Eleanor and her companions; and on such ridiculous pleas she was condemned on three days of the week to walk bareheaded, and bearing a lighted taper in her hand, through the streets of London, and afterwards to be confined for life in the Isle of Man. The unfortunate men of science connected with this affair were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn; which horrible sentence was fully carried into effect in the majority of cases.

The winter of 1434 was so severe that the Thames was frozen over sufficiently to bear heavy

waggons and thousands of persons on its surface. One of the amusements on the ice was the ceremony of roasting a small sheep. For a view of this extraordinary spectacle sixpence was demanded, and willingly paid. The meat, when roasted, was sold at one shilling a slice. Of booths there was a great collection, ornamented with streamers, flags, and signs, and in which there were a plentiful store of spirits, beer, gingerbread, &c. The grand walk was from Blackfriars Bridge to London Bridge. It was called the City Road, and was lined on each side with all sorts of tradesmen's stalls. Eight or ten printing-presses were erected, and numerous pieces were actually printed on the ice. One of the articles printed and sold on the ice contained the following verse—

"Behold, the river Thames is frozen o'er,
Which lately ships of mighty burden bore;
Now different arts and pastimes here you see,
But printing claims the superiority."

Swings, dancing in a barge, playing at skittles, &c., were likewise transferred from the land to the frozen body of the Thames, and numbers of people flocked to behold and to partake of the various sports and pastimes. Books and toys, labelled "Bought on the Thames," were seen in profusion. It was a good time for the watermen, for each person paid a toll of twopence or threepence before he was admitted to Frost Fair, which commenced about the 1st of February, and ended on the 5th.

And here we may be allowed to mention the story of Jane Shore. She was a beautiful woman, criminally attached to Edward IV., after whose death she was accused of witchcraft by Richard III., and did penance by walking through London

dressed in a white sheet, and carrying a burning taper. She was the wife of a goldsmith in Lombard Street, and is supposed by some writers to have died in a ditch, whence the origin of Shoreditch. It is, however, asserted by good authorities, that she lived forty years after her penance, though in extreme poverty.

British consuls—officers sent by the crown to foreign countries to protect the British merchants, and to facilitate trade—were first created in the reign of Richard III., since which period they have been regularly appointed by the crown.

The qualification for a member of Parliament at this time was the possession of £40 a year—equivalent to £400 of our present money. The peers attended parliament at their own cost, but all members of the House of Commons received regular sums as payment of their expenses. These early "payments of members" were, in the reign of the third Edward, fixed at four shillings a-day for a knight of the shire, and two shillings a-day for a citizen; and this rate of payment continued as long as the system continued to be adopted. It must be remembered that a shilling at that time was equal to twenty of ours, so that a county member would receive a sum per day equivalent to £4 of our money, and a borough member £2. These expenses were a sharp spur to the despatch of business. The number of representatives constituting the Commons of England about this period seems to have been 254—being 180 from 90 boroughs, and 74 knights of shires.

The condition of the people at the end of this period was far better than that at the close of the last; a very great improvement being annually observable. Strange to say, the civil wars greatly

contributed to the amelioration of the poorer English; the decrease in the numbers of the labouring classes, of course raised their value as labourers, and caused them to get double the wages they formerly demanded. When a man took up arms, he never consented to return to the condition of a villein. Wat Tyler's rebellion took place in the year 1381, and in 1450 the famous rise of the English people, headed by Jack Cade, took place. Shakespeare has given a ludicrous account of this latter affair, and we doubt not but that in his time the opinions held by the lower classes of the people in general, partook of the complexion our great poet has given to the riot.* But let us see what history says of this rising of the people. The fact is instructive, and we see in this record the advance made by the people since 1380.† "In 1380 their chief demand was the abolition of villeinage or slavery: for any political rights, any power of interfering in the making of laws, or in public affairs, there was no claim. In 1450, not a word was said about villeinage; that question had been settled—villeinage was nearly, if not altogether, swept away. What the commons now insisted upon was the redress of political, or at least public grievances; such as waste of the king's revenues, the unjust seizure by the crown of the property of the subject, delay in the administration of justice, and the illegal interference of the nobility in elections of knights of the shire; which last, they contended, ought to be free, and left where the law had placed them, in the hands of the people. ‡

* Henry VI.—Part II., Act IV.
† Langford.—Eng. Democracy, p. 18.
‡ Wade's History of the Middle and Working Classes—C. II., p. 10.

We have thus endeavoured to present to the reader a distinct, but perhaps imperfect, view of the manners, customs, state, and appearance of our forefathers living in the fifteenth century—a century which seems to close the more strictly feudal times—times which printing, literature, science, and art, were hastening to terminate, and not only to terminate, but to inaugurate an entirely new period with new states of society. It was a period by no means favourable to the intellectual or moral advance of the people. Voluptuousness, epicurism, and perjury, were everyday sins. The people were superstitious—running after pilgrimages, saints, fastings, and such like things; whilst they had so abandoned all love of God and love of neighbour, that they began to burn God's children and their own brothers for opinion's sake.

CHAPTER VI.

Manners and Customs of the English, from 1485 to 1603; during the reigns of Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth the Maiden.

FREE intercourse and reciprocal confidence between parents and their children, are the best criterions of civilized society. In the period now under review, domestic manners were severe and formal; hence, therefore, true domestic bliss was comparatively unknown to our ancestors. Elderly folk were haughty and reserved, and exacted abject deference from the young. No child ever presumed to sit in the presence of its parents, or to speak without leave. When tired, girls might kneel on cushions at the further end of the room, but boys were invariably expected to stand bare-headed. Even when sons arrived at manhood, they often stood uncovered and silent in their father's presence; and daughters, though women, stood like statues by the doorway, and were not permitted to sit down till their parents gave them leave. Something of this formality is observed in the palaces of kings in our own day, so great tyrants are custom and precedent. It was fortunate for children in the times of the Tudors that they were not with their parents all the day long, but only for a short time at stated periods. Corporal punishment was often resorted to. Roger Ascham, the tutor of Queen Elizabeth, used to "pinch, nip, and bob (slap) the princess if she displeased him in the least. Ladies carried

fans with handles a yard long, with which they struck their children whenever they were troublesome or disobedient!"

During the period under consideration, the wealthy still supported, in some degree, the ancient magnificence in their hospitality and in the number of their retainers. Queen Elizabeth often visited her wealthy courtiers: the Earl of Leicester gave her an entertainment in Kenilworth castle, which was remarkable for cost and magnificence. For example, one particular we are told is, that three hundred and sixty-five hogsheads of beer were drank at it. The Earl of Derby kept two hundred and forty servants. Burleigh, though he was frugal and had no paternal estate, kept one hundred servants. He entertained the queen twelve different times in his country-house, where she remained four or five weeks at a time. Each visit cost him between two and three thousand pounds. The English were then fond of good cheer and frolic-making, merry-making, and music; they were gross eaters and great drunkards; in manners rude, and in all their habits most disorderly. In the time of Elizabeth eight o'clock in the morning was the breakfast hour—eleven the dinner hour—and six the supper hour. The breakfast consisted of butter and eggs, boiled beef and ale, &c. All the men dined with their hats on, and took them off only during grace.

"The cookery of these times was distinguished by a profusion of hot spices, with which every dish was seasoned. At entertainments, the rank of the guests was discriminated by their situation above or below the saltcellar, which was placed invariably in the middle of the table; and the usher was instructed to displace such as might seat them-

selves above their betters. The chief servants always attended above the saltcellar, beneath which the table was crowded with poor dependants, whom the guests despised, and the servants neglected. Churchmen affected peculiar ceremony; and the abbot of St. Albans dined with greater state than the nobility. His table was elevated fifteen steps above the hall, and, in serving his dinner, the monks at every fifth step performed a hymn. He dined alone at the middle of his table, to the ends of which the guests of distinguished rank were admitted; and the monks, after attending the abbot, were served with equal respect by the novices. At Wolsey's entertainment of the French ambassadors, the company was summoned by trumpet to supper, and the courses were announced by a prelude of music." *

Cardinal Wolsey had such a love of pomp that his "train" consisted of five hundred servants, many of whom were knights and sons of noblemen. A priest went before him carrying a pillar of silver, surmounted with a cross, and noblemen-ushers cleared the way, crying, "Make way for my lord's grace!" The cardinal's vest was of gold and silk, a robe of scarlet cloth adorned his shoulders, and he held a sponge to his nose, lest he should be offended with the breath of the common people! When he went from home, he rode upon a mule covered with crimson velvet and gold furniture. When the king visited him, his banquets were most sumptuous, and dukes and earls condescended to act as his servants.

Queen Bess appears to have been as fond of show and noise as she was of dress; for we read that when she went in state to St. Paul's to hear

* Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, Book VI. c. 8.

one of the reformers preach, she had—besides a vast train of lords and ladies—one thousand soldiers, ten great cannons, hundreds of drums and trumpets, a party of morris-dancers, and two white bears in her train!

During the Wars of the Roses, agriculture and gardening were greatly neglected; but in this period much attention was paid to them, and various fruits and vegetables were introduced into England. When Queen Catherine wanted a salad, she was obliged to despatch a servant to the Netherlands to procure it. Potatoes are said to have been introduced into Ireland by Sir Walter Raleigh, who perhaps brought them from America. The general opinion is, that he had them planted in his own garden near Youghal, the county Cork. He is said to have given them to his gardener as a fine fruit from America, and ordered them to be planted in his kitchen-garden. In August the plants flowered, and in September they produced their apples; but these were so totally different from what the gardener had expected to see, that, in a fit of ill-humour, he pulled them and carried them to his master, asking him if those were the fine American fruit. Sir Walter either really was, or pretended to be, ignorant of the matter; and, having tasted them, told the man to dig up the *weeds* and throw them away. The gardener did so, but was astonished to find about a bushel of tuberous roots. Trial soon showed that this was the eatable part of the plant. The only written proof we have of the introduction of the potatoe by Raleigh, is found in the manuscript minutes of the Royal Society of London, December 13, 1693, when we are told the president, Sir Robert Southwell, informed the

fellows that his grandfather first cultivated potatoes in Ireland, and that he got them from Sir Walter Raleigh. They were cultivated for many years in Ireland before they were known in England, and were introduced into this island by the shipwreck of a vessel containing some of them, on the coast of Lancashire, at a place called North Meols, which is still famous for their cultivation.* In South America potatoes grow wild. They were considered a great delicacy in the reign of James I. In the year 1619, we find them mentioned as one of the articles provided for the use of the queen's household. The quantity procured was very small, and the price two shillings a-pound.

"At the close of the fifteenth century, the dress of the English was exceedingly fantastical and absurd, insomuch that it was even difficult to distinguish one sex from the other."† Planché shrewdly remarks that this complaint is as old as the Conquest. The author of the Boke of Kervynge, quoted by Strutt, says to a certain personage, "warme your soverayne his petticotte, his doublett, and his stomacher, and then put on hys hozen, and then hys schone or slyppers, then stryten up his hozen mannerly, and tye them up, then lace his doublet hole by hole," &c. In Barclay's "Ship of Fooles of the Worlde," printed by Pynson, A.D. 1508, may be found several notices of the dress of the day. Mention is made of some who had their necks—

> "Charged with collars and chaines
> In golden withes, their fingers full of rings,
> Their necks naked almost unto the raines,
> Their sleeves blazing like unto a crane's wings."

* Popular Encyclopedia, Part XIV., p. 756-7.
† Strutt.

Skelton, the poet-laureate of Henry VII., has left us a humorous description of Eleanor Rumming, a noted hostess of his time, whose dress may be considered a pretty good model of the costume of females in humble life:—

"In her furr'd flocket,
And grey russet rocket,
Her *duke* (huke or heuke?) of Lincoln green;
It had been her's I weene
More than forty yeare,
And so it doth appeare.
And the grene bare threads
Look like sea-weeds,
Withered like hay,
The wool worn away;
And yet I dare say
She thinks herself gay,
Upon a holiday,
When she doth array,
And girdeth in her gates,
Stitched and pranked with plates,
Her kirtle bristow red,
With cloths upon her head,
They weigh a ton of lead,
She hobbles as she goes,
With her blanket hose,
Her shoone (shoes) smeared with tallow."*

The ordinary costume of Harry VIII. was, of course, that of the nobility and gentry of his time, and we find it to consist of a full-skirted jacket or doublet, with large sleeves to the wrist, over which was worn a short but equally full coat or cloak, with loose hanging sleeves, and a broad rolling collar of fur; a brimmed cap jewelled, and bordered with ostrich feather; stockings, and square-toed shoes. Ruffs or ruffles appear at the wrist, and a sword was worn at the side. Soon after his accession, the close hose, fitting exactly to the limbs—in fact, the Norman *chaussés*—were revived under the still older name of *trouses*.† At a grand

* MS., Harleian, lib. 7333, quoted by Planché.
† Planché—Hist of British Costume, p. 293.

banquet, given at Westminster in the first year of his reign, he is described as wearing a suit of "shorte garments, little—reaching but a little—beneath the pointes, of blew velvet and crymosyne, with long sleeves, all cut and lyned with cloth of gold, and the utter (outer) parts of the garments powdered with castles and sheaves of arrowes—the badges of Catherine, his queen—of fyne dokett (ducat) golde; the upper part of the hosen of like sewte and facion; the nether parts of scarlet, powdered with tymbrelles of fine golde. On his head was a bonnet of damaske silver, flatte woven in the stoll, and thereupon wrought with golde and ryche feathers in it." *

Then, as in our own day, people aped the costume and manners of their superiors. Camden, in his "Remains," tells an amusing tale of a shoemaker of Norwich, named John Drakes, who in the time of Henry VIII., coming to a tailor's, and finding some fine French tawny cloth lying there, which had been sent to be made into a gown for Sir Philip Calthrop, took a fancy to the colour, and ordered the tailor to buy as much of the same stuff for him, and make him a gown of it, precisely of the same fashion as the knight's, whatever that might be. Sir Philip, arriving some time afterwards to be measured, saw the additional cloth, and inquired to whom it belonged. "To John Drakes," replied the tailor, "who will have it made in the self-same fashion as yours is made." "Well," said the knight, "in good time be it; I will have mine as full of cuts as thy shears can make it"—and both garments were finished according to the order. The shoemaker, on receiving his gown slashed almost to shreds, began

* Hall—Union of the Families of York and Lancaster.

to abuse the tailor, but received for answer, "I have done nothing but what you bade me; for, as Sir Philip Calthrop's gowne is, even so have I made yours." "By my latchet," growled the shoemaker, "I will never wear a gentleman's fashion again!"

In the reign of the eighth Henry, persons dressed very much as the yeoman of the guard, known as "Beef-eaters," are now, or were lately, dressed—in very showy clothes, full of red and yellow stripes. The courtiers stuffed out their clothes to make themselves look as big as the ugly king, whom Leigh Hunt likens to a Whitechapel butcher. But though all their dress was wide and baggy, yet the sleeves were so tight that some had them sewed on the arm every day. The shoes of this period were twelve or fourteen inches across the toes. The costume of children was similar to that of the London blue-coat boys of the present day. Servants carried pointed bucklers, which, with their caps, they left on the sideboard when they waited at table; even ploughmen had their shields, swords, and bows, which they left in the corner of the field, when they went to work.

About the middle of the reign of Elizabeth, the great change took place that gave the female costume of the sixteenth century its remarkable character. The body was imprisoned in whalebone to the hips; the partelet, which covered the neck to the chin, was removed, and an enormous ruff, rising gradually from the front of the shoulders to nearly the height of the head behind, encircled the wearer like the nimbus or glory of a saint. From the bosom, now partially unclosed, descended an interminable stomacher, on each side of which jutted out horizontally the enormous *vardingale-*

the prototype of that modern-antique, the hoop, which was banished the court by King George the Fourth, to the great joy of all classes of his majesty's subjects, saving only the metropolitan dressmakers. The cap or coif was occasionally exchanged for a round bonnet like that of the men, or the hair dressed in countless curls, and adorned with ropes and stars of jewels, and at the close of the reign—for the first time—with feathers.*

In the second year of the reign of good Queen Bess began the wearing of lawn and cambric ruffs, which, Stow informs us, no one could starch or stiffen; she therefore sent for some Dutch women, and the wife of her coachman Guillan became her first starcher. In 1564, Mistress Dingham Vander Plasse, a Fleming, came to London with her husband, and followed the profession of a starcher of ruffs, in which she greatly excelled. She met with much encouragement, and was the first who publicly taught the art of starching, her charge being four or five pounds for each scholar, and twenty shillings in addition for teaching them how to seethe or make the starch. Stubbs, in speaking of starch and starchers, says—"The devil hath learned them to wash and dive their ruffs, which being dry will then stand stiff and inflexible about their necks." He also mentions "a device made of wires, crested for the purpose, and whipped all over either with gold, thread, silver, or silk," for supporting these ruffs, and called "a supertasse or under-propper." The ruffs were worn so absurdly long, that persons were stationed at the gates of the different streets, to cut down every ruff which exceeded three feet in width. This fashion lasted

* Planché.

during the whole reign of James I., when a Mrs. Turner was hanged up by her ruff for murdering Sir Thomas Overbury. This dismal tragedy changed the fashion—as well it might.

As early as the third year of Elizabeth, we read that Mistress Montague, the queen's silk woman, presented to her majesty a pair of black knit silk stockings, made in England, which pleased her so much, that she would never wear any cloth hose afterwards; not only on account of the delicacy of the article itself, but from a laudable desire to encourage this new species of English manufacture by her own example. "Soon after this," says Stow, "William Rider, then apprentice to Thomas Burdet, at the bridge foot, opposite the church of St. Magnus, seeing a pair of knit worsted stockings at an Italian merchant's, brought from Mantua, borrowed them, and having made a pair like unto them, presented them to the Earl of Pembroke, which was the first pair of worsted stockings knit in this country.*

Probably no woman ever studied variety and richness of dress with greater assiduity than good Queen Bess. She did her utmost to make herself attractive. She appeared almost every day in a different costume, and, so fond of clothes was she, that she never parted with any of them! At her death, three thousand dresses were found in her wardrobe, all the habits she had ever worn. Some of them were emblematical. The lining of one was worked with eyes and ears to signify *vigilance*, and a serpent was embroidered in the arm with pearls and rubies to signify *wisdom*.

The pocket-handkerchiefs of the ladies were frequently wrought with gold and silver. In the

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 328-9.

old ballad of George Barnwell, it is said of Millwood—

> "A handkerchief she had,
> All wrought with beaten gold;
> Which she, to stay her trickling tears,
> Before her eyes did hold."

Paul Hentzer, a German, who travelled in England in 1598, thus speaks of Bess:—"Next came the queen, in the sixty-fifth year of her age, as we are told, very majestic; her face oblong, fair, but wrinkled. She had in her ears two pearls, with drops; she wore false hair, and that red; and upon her head she had a small crown. She was dressed in white silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans, and over it a mantle of black silk, shot with silver threads. Her train was very long, and the end of it borne by a marchioness. Instead of a chain, she had an oblong collar of gold and jewels. Whoever speaks to her, it is kneeling; now and then she raises some with her hand. While we were there, she gave William Slawator her hand to kiss, sparkling with rings and jewels—a mark of particular favour. Wherever she turned her face, as she was going along, every body fell down upon his knees. In the antechamber, petitions were presented to her, and she received them most graciously, which occasioned the exclamation, 'God save the Queen Elizabeth!' She answered it with 'I thancke youe, myne good peupel.'"

Pockets, a convenience unknown to the ancients, are perhaps the latest real improvement in dress; but, instead of pockets, a loose pouch seems to have been sometimes suspended from the girdle in the time of the Tudors—a fashion still prevalent on some parts of the continent.

A great change was made in the male costume

during the reign of Elizabeth. Stubbs assures us that no people in the world "are so curious in new-fangles" as those of this country. He describes their costly shirts of cambric, holland, lawn, and the finest cloths, wrought throughout with needle-work of silk, and curiously stitched with open seams, and many other knacks besides, which rendered them so expensive that some cost ten pounds a-piece. The great ruffs worn by the men, he mentions almost in the same words as those in which he descanted upon the ruffs of the ladies—adding, however, that every body will have them whether they can afford them or not, and, sooner than go without, will sell or mortgage their houses and lands. In the earliest paintings or prints of the reign of Elizabeth, we perceive the men's costume to consist of the large trunk hose, the long-waisted doublet, the short cloak or mantle with its standing collar, the ruff, the hat-band and feather, the shoes and roses.

At this period houses were generally built of strong timber. "In times past, men were contented to dwell in houses built of willow; but when our houses were built of willow, then had we oaken men; but now that our houses are made of oak, our men are not only become willow, but a great many altogether straw. In these the courage of the owner was a sufficient defence to keep the house in safety; but now the assurance of the timber must defend the men from being robbed." *

Most of the houses inhabited by the wealthy during the Tudor dynasty were large, comfortless places, surrounded by walled courts, which seemed more like prisons than gentlemen's habitations. In Elizabeth's time the style of house adopted by

* Holingshed.

the wealthy was something between a castle and a mansion. To each residence there was a moat, a gateway, and one or two strong turrets, more, however, for ornament than defence. Erasmus describes the houses of the English as being made of wattling plastered over with clay; the fires were kindled against the walls, and the smoke escaped either through the roofs, or through the doors and windows.

The furniture of the best houses in this period was still quaint, but often rich and picturesque. The halls and chambers were still surrounded with hangings of tapestry, on which glowed hunting-scenes, woodlands, dogs, horsemen, flying stags, &c. Hardwick-hall, in Derbyshire, is one of the finest preserved houses of that age, and is well worth a visit. In such old houses we find an abundance of furniture of that period. The chairs are generally high-backed, richly carved, stuffed, and covered with the richest velvet or satin. In Winchester cathedral is still preserved the chair in which Queen Mary was crowned and married, a present from the pope! Cupboards, long tables, forms, chairs, and a few joint-stools formed the principal furniture. The beds were apparently comfortable and often elegant, but people of inferior condition slept on mats or straw pallets, with rugs for coverlets, and logs for pillows. Looking-glasses were now gradually superseding mirrors of polished steel, and were carried about by ladies in their girdles. Forks, though known, were not generally used. Silver spoons were made to fold up, and were by wealthy folk carried in their pockets for their own use. Spoons of wood and horn were common among the populace. In Mary's reign drinking-glasses were invented,

and were considered more precious than silver. Crockery was not uncommon, but china was unknown. Carpets were not used till long after the Tudors had ceased to reign—rushes were strewn on the floors, and the filth which was allowed to accumulate was often the cause of infectious diseases. Linen was so scarce that the Earl of Northumberland, a most wealthy and luxurious man, had only eight table-cloths for his own use, and one for the use of his servants, which latter was washed once a month! When a rich man removed to his country or town house, he took most of his furniture, linen, saucepans, and often windows with him. Of chairs and tables there were not many to move; one long table and three long benches constituted nearly all the furniture of Northumberland's state apartment!

"Though those times were magnificent, most of the comforts and conveniences of modern life were unknown. Queen Margaret, on her marriage with James IV., made her public entry into Edinburgh, riding on a pillion behind the king." *

The public amusements of the nation underwent as great a revolution during this century as its religion or its literature. The fall of the church, and the introduction of fire-arms, were fatal to the spirit of chivalry, and the whole host of religious pageants and plays. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth exerted themselves to prolong the exercises of chivalry, but they had long lost their real soul, and fell lifeless to the ground. In vain was the tournament of the cloth of gold, or the jousts at which Elizabeth presided at Greenwich. They had become mere mockeries of what once had been the all-engrossing contests of knightly honour. In

* New Hist. of Great Britain, by Adams, p. 175.

vain did the nobles endeavour to keep alive the long-bow and the feats of archery. The musket and the sportsman's gun, converted the bow and quiver into mere playthings. The tournament gave way to the joust, in which the contest was conducted with headless lances, and fighting at the barriers with blunted axes; and that at length gave way to "riding at the ring," in which the gentlemen did not run their lances through the bodies of their antagonists, but through a ring suspended from a pole! The last of the ancient exercises was the contest with the sword and buckler—but the sword was deprived of both edge and point; and, as the combatants were not allowed to lunge but only to strike, the practice was perfectly harmless. In Henry VIII.'s time, however, the art of fencing was introduced; and in the time of Elizabeth, the use of the rapier and the deadly thrust, rendered the acquirement of the art of fence a matter of the first importance to noblemen and gentlemen.

But though the chivalric exercises died out in this age, never was the love of pageant and display more thoroughly alive. The revival of the Greek literature brought forward a crowd of gods and goddesses, who figured in public processions and galas; and the strangest allegorical absurdities were gazed at by grave princes and their counsellors, as well as by the ladies, with all the enthusiasm of country lads and lasses gaping at the actors of a strolling theatre, or the marionettes of a puppet-show.

Any one who chooses to wade through worthy Laneham's description of the nineteen days in which Queen Bess was entertained at Kenilworth by Leicester, will find his fill of giants,

distressed ladies of the lake, floating islands, and sham Arions riding on sham dolphins, &c. More healthy, but little less romantic, were the holiday sports which had survived the church, and in which mingled the princes, nobles, and people. The old mystery did not for some time disappear before the secular drama, and the Coventry Play was played before Elizabeth at Kenilworth. May-day had still its grand May-pole; and Henry VIII. did not disdain, on May-day, 1515, "to go a-maying" to Shooter's Hill, with his queen and his sister, the queen-dowager of France. May-day was also the great day of the milkmaids, who danced from door to door with a pyramid of plate on their heads.

To relate all the jollities with which Christmas was celebrated is beyond our space. The Christmas carols, with which the wakes or waits awoke all the sleeping people for a fortnight before—the Lord of Misrule, whose reign was from All-Hallow Eve to Pentecost—the yule-log dragged into the hall and piled on the fire—the boar's-head feast, with plum-pudding and mince pies; and various dances and games, were as much in fashion as in the days of the ancient church. Plough Monday, St. Valentine's Day, Easter and Whitsuntide, St. John's Eve, and all the charities of Maunday Thursday, were still maintained in all their ancient glory. Even Palm Sunday, when the figure of Christ went in procession mounted on a wooden ass, resisted the reformation till the year 1548, or nearly to the end of Edward VI.'s reign!

The drama, which was now shaping itself into freedom and splendour under such men as Shakespeare, Jonson, and Marlowe, was yet conducted in a very rude style. The theatres were mostly of

wood; the actors were rarely arrayed in proper costume; women's parts were represented by boys; and any scenery which the play had, remained, like a picture on a country fair booth, throughout the whole piece. The aristocratic frequenters sat on the stage, for there were no boxes or dress circle, and the "gods" sat on stools, and enjoyed their pipes and beer during the performance. But when the regular dramatic pieces had once gained possession of the stage, their progress was indeed rapid. The people hailed them with pleasure. The earliest patent for acting plays is dated in 1574; but very soon afterwards, at least fifteen licensed theatres were open to the inhabitants of London. The best plays were acted at the Blackfriars' theatre, which was crowded daily with people of all ranks. The price of admittance to the best places at the best theatres was, as late as 1614, only one shilling; and at the inferior ones, a penny or twopence would procure admission to a pretty good place. Before the exhibition began, three pieces of music were usually played; the instruments chiefly used being trumpets, cornets, and hautboys. The person who spoke the prologue was ushered in by trumpets, and wore a long black velvet cloak. Plays began about one o'clock in the afternoon, and generally lasted about two hours. One dramatic piece composed the whole entertainment. But the theatre had to contend in the affections of the public with the bear-garden, bull-baiting, and cock-fighting; even the most wealthy people patronised these disgusting amusements. As Sunday had been the great day of the church-plays or mysteries, so Sunday was the chief day of the theatre, which eventually brought it into disrepute with the serious portion

of the community. When bull-baiting was announced for a Sunday, the theatre was closed, that it might not interfere with the more intellectual entertainments! Queen Elizabeth was especially fond of the bear-garden, and that sport was consequently included by Leicester in the recreations which he provided for her at Kenilworth. In fact, bear-gardens, cock-pits, bowling-greens, tennis-courts, dicing-houses, taverns, smoking ordinaries, and the like, abounded, giving us a fair idea of the taste of that golden age. Hunting and hawking were still pastimes of the gentry, and horse-races became a great rage; the first mention of them being on the occasion just mentioned, when Henry went a-maying in 1515, when it is said that Henry and his brother-in-law, the duke of Suffolk, ended the day by "racing on great coursers." In fact, the taste of this remarkable age was in reality of a very low type—sensual, empty, and vulgar; of a stamp, indeed, which none but the lowest of our present population could for a moment endure—a fact marking the immense advance, since then, of refinement in mind and in morals among the English. A people any purer and more humane, could not, in truth, have existed amid the daily spectacles which surrounded them—the heads of traitors stuck on gate and bridge, the bloody execution of queens and nobles, and crowds of wretches dangling from a thousand gibbets. The flaming stake, the branding-iron, the scourge, and the stocks, were the most familiar objects to a people who required a Shakespeare to interlard his finest tragedies with harlequins and fools.*

Among the customs of this period, there was no

* William Howitt.

one more prominent nor more lasting, than that of smoking tobacco. This herb was brought to England in 1596 by the remnant of Sir Walter Raleigh's unfortunate settlers in Virginia. Raleigh himself was one of its first admirers; but for some time he kept his attachment to it a secret. At last the foible was discovered by an amusing accident. The story goes, that as he was enjoying his pipe in solitude, forgetful that he had ordered his servant to bring him a goblet of ale, the faithful domestic entered the study, and finding, as he thought, his master's brains on fire, and evaporating in smoke and flame through his nostrils, did his utmost to extinguish the conflagration, by emptying the goblet on his master's head; and, rushing out of the room, alarmed the family with an account of the frightful scene he had witnessed! After that event, Sir Walter Raleigh made no secret of smoking tobacco. Indeed, some years afterwards, he smoked two pipes publicly on the scaffold.

Coffee was imported from Arabia in the time of Henry VI. Many sermons against coffee-drinking are extant, written at the time it was introduced into Europe, as there are also many sermons against smoking. We recollect having read the following passage—"They cannot wait until the smoke of the infernal regions surrounds them, but encompass themselves with smoke of their own accord, and drink a poison which God made black, that it might bear the devil's colour."

Shillings were first issued in the reign of Henry VII.; they were only half their present size and value. In 1546, a law was made for fixing the interest of money at ten per cent. This was the first legal interest known in England. For-

merly all laws of that nature were regarded as usurious. The preamble of this very law treats the interest of money as illegal and criminal, and the prejudices against it still remained so strong that the law permitting interest was repealed in the next reign. The pound sterling was first called a *sovereign* in the reign of the eighth Henry. In the reign of Edward VI., crowns, half-crowns, and sixpenny pieces were first issued.

In the time of Henry VIII. a law was passed to fix the price of provisions, and so forth. The price of two pounds of beef or mutton was one penny; the same quantity of veal or pork cost a penny farthing. Master workmen had fourpence a day; others had threepence. In the early part of this period exportation of horses was prohibited. In order to promote archery, no bows were allowed to be sold at a higher price than six shillings and fourpence. Prices were also fixed by law on woollen cloth, caps, and hats, &c.

In the reign of Henry VII., the Star Chamber court was instituted, for the trial of crown officers and offences against government. This oppressive court, presided over by the king, was abolished in the reign of Charles I. It was so called, because the contracts of the Jews—called *starra*—were kept in a chest there.

At the coronation of Henry VII., the Yeomen of the Guard were established, who, besides guarding the king, waited at table; and from attending to the duties of the *buffette*, buffets, or sideboards, received the name of *buffetiers*, now corrupted into "beef-eaters." These buffetiers composed the first standing army. There were fifty of them, each of whom was six feet high.

In the same reign, America, the East and West

Indies, and the Cape of Good Hope, were discovered. Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, first discovered the islands contiguous to North America, on the 12th of October, 1492. Sebastian Cabot first landed on the continent of North America. Americus Vesputius gave his name to the new world; though it ought, in justice, to have been called after the persevering and brave Columbus.

The following events, &c., occurred in the reign of Henry VIII.:—

The secretary of state was first appointed. The religious order called the Jesuits, or order of Jesus, was founded by a Spaniard, named Ignatius Loyola, A.D. 1535. Wales was first represented by members of parliament in 1535. The corporation called the Brethren of the Trinity, in London, was founded. Its object was to superintend the interests of the British shipping, appoint pilots for the Thames, erect lighthouses, and grant licences to poor seamen to row on the Thames. Henry assumed the new style of address—"Your most gracious majesty." Before his reign the English kings were styled, "Your Grace," or "Your Highness." He also called himself king, instead of lord, of Ireland.

This king expended £14,000 in building a ship, called "The Great Harry," which was, correctly speaking, the first ship in the English navy; formerly our kings either hired or pressed ships from the merchants. In the time of good Queen Bess the navy had increased from one to forty-two vessels. None of the ships carried above forty guns; indeed, four only came up to that number; but such was the power and valour of the fleet at this time, that we find Elizabeth was called the

"queen of the seas." The greatest naval feat in her reign was the destruction of "the invincible armada"—a vast fleet gathered together by Philip of Spain, Mary's husband, to exterminate the reformation in the British empire. This great fleet consisted of one hundred and thirty gigantic ships, as well as a large number of boats and flat-bottomed transports. The English navy at this period, comprised only twenty-eight frigates, but many other vessels were built and manned by private individuals.

"No person, by himself, or his servant, or other person, for his gain, hiring, or living, was to keep any house, alley, or place of bowling, quoits, tennis, dicing-table, cards, or any other unlawful game, under penalty of forty shillings per day, and of six-and-eightpence to every such person playing. All justices, mayors, and head officers, were empowered to enter any house and search for such offenders, and commit them till they gave security not to offend again. Officers were to make a strict search once a month, or were themselves to suffer a penalty of forty shillings. Workmen, apprentices, and husbandmen were only allowed to play at such games during Christmas, and then only in their masters' houses or presence."

Another statute of this reign introduces the earliest notice of a singular people—the gipsies. It was enacted in the 22nd of Henry VIII., that "persons calling themselves *Egyptians*, who had lately come into the country, used no trade, and practised no handicraft, but wandered from shire to shire in great companies, pretending to tell fortunes, and committing many felonies and robberies, should be allowed sixteen days to depart, and if found in it after that time, should

be imprisoned and deprived of all their goods and chattels; and all sheriffs and justices of the peace were commanded to seize all such Egyptians thereafter coming into the country, if they did not depart within fifteen days, and appropriate their effects to the king's use." The continuance of this nomadic tribe on our heaths and commons to the present day, is evidence that the statute of Henry took no effect upon them.*

The suppression of the convents by Henry VIII., produced great distress and discontent amongst the poor. Upwards of 50,000 of the aged, sick, and poor, were turned out of those establishments. In the fifth year of the reign of Elizabeth, the first law was enacted for the relief of the poor.

Pins were introduced from France by Catherine Howard, the fifth wife of Henry VIII. Before her time, ribbons, loops, laces, clasps, and wooden skewers, were used as fastenings for ladies' dresses. For many years pins were considered a great luxury, and ladies used to receive from their husbands or parents an annual allowance to furnish themselves with pins; hence a woman's pocket-money is still occasionally called "pin-money."

In the reign of Elizabeth knives were made. These were the first articles of cutlery manufactured in England. In the same reign were introduced pocket watches from Germany, fans, muffs, and false hair from Italy, and carriages from France. The stocking-frame, sail-cloths, needles, stops in printing, newspapers, fire-ships, and paper-mills, were also invented. About this time the Rev. W. Lee of Nottingham invented the stocking-frame. The story of this invention is well known: how, sitting beside his young wife, and watching

* Pic. Hist. of Eng., Vol. II., p. 575.

her nimble fingers as she knit a stocking, he bethought him of a plan by which all that minute and sedentary labour might be saved. After much thought and frequent disappointments, he produced the stocking-loom. But he quickly discovered that his work was unappreciated. As soon as his invention was made known, the stocking-knitters drove him from England, through fear of his invention ruining their trade. Poor Lee went to France, where he was treated no better, and died of a broken heart, and in the greatest poverty. This is what history says; tradition tells a different tale. The origin of his invention is attributed to a pique he had against a townswoman with whom he was in love, and who it appears "neglected his passion." She got her livelihood by knitting stockings, and, with the ungenerous object of depreciating her employment, he constructed this frame, first working at it himself, and then teaching his brother and other relations. The first story, however, seems most probable. Stowe informs us, that Lee not only manufactured stockings in his frame, but also "waistcoats and divers other things." Needles were invented in the time of Edward VI., but the art of making them died with the inventor. Elias Growse, a German, recovered the art of making them, and carried on his trade at Buckingham, where there is even now a large needle manufactory. The first newspapers were printed and circulated to apprise the nation of the defeat of the Spanish Armada; but we hear nothing more of them till the reign of Charles I., in 1642. The first paper-mill was established at Dartford in Kent, by a German, who was knighted by Elizabeth for his invention.

In the reign of Edward VI., a law was made respecting slaves. If a slave ran away from his master, he was to be branded on his breast or forehead with hot irons, and fed on bread and water. That most unnatural and abominable traffic, the slave trade, was introduced in Elizabeth's reign, by John Hawkins of Devonshire, who fitted out a vessel to seize African negroes, and to sell them to the Spaniards in America. This scandalous trade in human life was abolished in England in the reign of George III., 1807, and two years afterwards it was abolished in France, Spain, and Holland. In 1526, an attempt was made to extinguish slavery, but it failed: and even Cromwell, after the battle of Dunbar, in 1650, sent his Scottish prisoners as slaves to the West Indian colonies. It was finally abolished in England by law in the reign of Charles II., though the colliers in Scotland were bondsmen till the year 1775. Free workmen are first noticed as a distinct class in 1350; and then laws were passed regulating the wages for each trade, and the kind of apparel that the people should wear. They were prohibited by a law, passed in 1388, from moving from place to place, and were to be paid in money or provisions, at the choice of their employers. In 1363 a law was passed declaring that artificers and servants are to be served once a day with meat and fish, or the waste of victuals, as milk and cheese; to wear cloth not exceeding twelvepence per yard in price. Carters, ploughmen, neatherds, and other agricultural labourers, were to wear black russet, not exceeding one shilling per yard.*

In the short reign of Edward VI., a law was passed permitting the clergy to marry! The

*Langford—English Democracy—pp. 10, 11.

lords-lieutenant of the counties were then also first appointed, whose duties are to manage the militia, grant commissions to its officers, and in case of rebellion to act as colonels. It was in this reign, too, that the sons of peers were permitted to sit in the lower house. Lord Francis Russell was the first nobleman who availed himself of this privilege.

In Mary's reign there was a remarkable shower of hail; it is said that hailstones fell in Nottingham half a pound in weight.

Sir Francis Drake, a native of Devonshire, was the first Englishman who sailed round the world. He completed his voyage in three years.

Elizabeth granted monopolies to several companies. Among others to the East India Company, to which was confined the exclusive right of trading in the East Indies, a right which has in modern times been gradually withdrawn, till in the present day the old trading company is powerless for good or evil. The Custom-House, the Stock Exchange, and the university of Dublin, were founded in the same reign. The first Royal Exchange was built by Sir Thomas Gresham of Norfolk. He was called the "Royal Merchant" for his munificent charities. He, in fact, it was who laid the foundation of England's commercial greatness.

In 1544 good lands were let at one shilling per acre. Commodities, however, were not cheap in proportion, owing in a great measure to the indifferent husbandry of that age.

In 1588, the Chest at Chatham was established, which, by means of a small deduction from the pay of every seaman, provides a yearly allowance for the wounded.

In 1589, coaches were first introduced into England.

The hackney coach act passed in 1693, and in the year 1770 there were as many as 1100 hackney-carriages in use in England, principally in the metropolis.

In the time of Elizabeth, tea was brought from China by the Dutch, but it was scarcely known in England till the reign of Charles II.; even as late as the fire of London a pound of "China tea" was considered a handsome present.

Woolsacks in the House of Lords date their origin from the time of Elizabeth.

When an act of parliament was passed to prevent the exportation of wool, woolsacks were placed in the House of Lords, whereon the Lord Chancellor sat. The object was to commemorate this source of our national wealth. In our day the woolsack is a handsome cushioned seat, from which the principal law lords usually address the House of Peers.

The phrase, "hear, hear!" was now first used in parliament "to remind members of the duty of attending to the discussion;" but gradually it became what we now find it—a cry indicative, according to the tone in which it is uttered, of admiration, acquiescence, indignation, or decision.

In this period lived "The Admirable Crichton," who was born in Perthshire in 1551, and educated at St. Andrew's College; before he was twenty years of age he had run through the whole circle of sciences, in addition to which he was an accomplished gentleman. He went to Paris, where he challenged all the scholars to dispute with him in any art or science, and in any language, ancient or modern. Having managed this disputation

with great success, from nine in the morning till six in the evening, the professors presented him with a diamond ring and a purse of gold. The next day he went to a tilting match, and in presence of the court carried off the prize fifteen times successively. From thence he went to Rome, where he disputed in the presence of the Pope and the cardinals. On he went, surprising every body, and becoming popular in all the seats of continental learning. In Venice he became intimate with the learned Aldus Manutius, the printer, who dedicated to him, in a very adulatory tone, the Paradoxes of Cicero. At Mantua he is said to have slain a famous doctor in a duel. The Duke of Mantua was so pleased with Crichton that he appointed him tutor to his son, a licentious young man. This appointment proved fatal to him; for one night, as he was walking through the streets at carnival time, he was attacked by six ruffians, and, after a gallant defence, lost his life. His assassin is believed to have been the prince, his degenerate pupil. This event took place in the year 1583. Four of his Latin poems are extant, but they exhibit no trace of that wonderful knowledge and skill for which he has obtained so marvellous a reputation.*

The most remarkable event, or rather series of events, that ever occurred in England, or perhaps in the world, took place about this time. We need scarcely say that we refer to the Reformation. Martin Luther is said to have been the first man who had the courage to attack the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, and his example was speedily followed by others, so that the Papacy received a blow from which it has never since re-

* Timperley's History of Printing.

covered. Whilst Luther was exposing the Church of Rome, Henry VIII. denied the Pope's supremacy, and proclaimed himself "head of the English Church." Henry also gave the people permission to read the Bible in their own language—a boon never before granted by any sovereign. A Bible was chained to the reading-desk of every parish church in the country, and, as general access was given to this parish Bible at all hours of the day, the church was daily crowded, and thousands learned to read for the sole purpose of reading the Scriptures. The Reformers were called Protestants, because at the Diet of Spires, in Germany, they entered their "protest" against the decree, "That all reform in religion is unlawful." Henry VIII. destroyed 3000 abbeys, monasteries, and convents—pensioned off their inmates, and seized their treasures. The value of the church property seized by the king amounted to £8,000,000, according to the present worth of money.

"Whilst Edward VI. thoroughly established protestantism, Mary as completely reinstated popery, and with a series of horrors which stamped terror and aversion of Catholic ascendancy for ever deep in the spirit of this nation. The number of persons who died in the flames in that awful reign, for their faith and the freedom of conscience, is stated to be two hundred and eighty-eight; but Lord Burleigh estimated those who perished by fire, torture, famine, and imprisonment, at not less than four hundred." *

Besides these, vast numbers suffered cruelly in a variety of ways. "Some of the professors were thrown into dungeons, noisome holes, dark, loathsome, and stinking corners; others lying in fetters

* Pict. Hist. of Eng.—Vol. II., p. 582.

and chains, and loaded with so many irons that they could scarcely stir. Some tied in the stocks with their heels upwards; some having their legs in the stocks, with their necks chained to the wall with gorgets of iron; some with hands and legs in the stocks at once; sometimes both hands in and both legs out; sometimes the right hand with the left leg, or the left hand with the right leg, fastened in the stocks with manacles and fetters, having neither stool nor stone to sit on to ease their woeful bodies; some standing in Skevington's gives—commonly called Skevington's daughter—which were most painful engines of iron, with their bodies doubled; some whipped and scourged, beaten with rods, and buffeted with fists; and some having their hands burned with a candle to try their patience, and force them to relent; some hunger-pined, and some miserably famished and starved." *

Elizabeth renounced all allegiance to Rome, though she hesitated to declare herself supreme head of the English Church till the title was conferred upon her by parliament. Elizabeth was no real reformer, though she doubtless acted up to the light she possessed. She laid the press under the most rigorous restrictions. No book was allowed to be printed or published without the licence of the queen, or permission obtained from the persons named by her for that purpose. She carried the reformation at the point of the sword. The people were commanded to attend their parish churches under severe penalties. In the twenty-third year of her reign, the penalty for non-attendance at the established church was raised to £20 per month! Like her father, the

* Coverdale.

longer she lived the more resolute she became in enforcing her own peculiar dogmas on the whole body of her subjects. She had no notion of the freedom of the press, or liberty of conscience—except for herself! In 1562, King Edward's forty-two articles of religion were reduced to thirty-nine—their present number. In 1571 they underwent a further revision, and were made binding on the clergy, who were forced to subscribe to them before they could be admitted to holy orders. The church of England still adheres to the canon of Elizabeth.

The great, noble, and divine principle of the entire liberty of the gospel, was one too elevated to be arrived at suddenly after so many ages of spiritual despotism, and required long and earnest study of the spirit and example of our Lord, severe struggles and bloody deaths, and incredible sufferings in those who came to see the sublime truth, before the battle of religious freedom was fought out, and all parties could admit the truth which had revealed itself to Charles V., when he amused himself with clock-making—that as no two clocks can be made to go precisely alike, so it is folly to expect all men to think in precisely the same manner.

The period we have just reverted to was marked by vast progress, and by changes which were the springs of still more wonderful advances in after ages. Mighty were the revolutions in politics, religion, literature, philosophy, and morals, which had their origin in this period of our history. The violent, passionate, sensual, and arbitrary Henry the Eighth hesitated not to renounce allegiance to that great spiritual power which for above a thousand years had ruled haughtily over

Europe and all its kings and warriors. "By this deed he set free for ever the mind and conscience of the nation. In vain did he endeavour to bind them down in a knot of his own making. Though he hurled his fiercest terms against those who instantly claimed a liberty, which he intended only for himself, he had broken the mighty spell of ages—a power and a mystery before which the world had bowed in impotent awe; and no chains which he could forge, no creed which he could set up, no hierarchy which he could frame, could possess more than the strength of the fire-scorched flax against the will of the enfranchised people. He had let loose the flood of religious desire, which had age-long been dashing moodily against the old mounds of superstition; and he might as well have attempted to stem the current of the Thames with a hurdle as to re-imprison the public mind." *

It will scarcely be credited, says Howitt, that at the close of the Wars of the Roses the whole population of England and Wales did not exceed two millions and a half—about the present population of London. But in 1575, that is, in the seventeenth year of Elizabeth's reign, the men fit to bear arms alone amounted to 1,172,674, and the entire population to not less than five millions. Harrison, in his "Description of England" at this time, says, that "some do grudge at the great increase of people in these days, thinking a necessary herd of cattle far better than a superfluous augmentation of mankind. They laid," he informs us, "the cause upon God, as though he were in fault for sending such increase of people, or want of wars that should consume them;" affirming that "the

*Progress of the Nation, Vol. II., p. 569.

land was never so full." So little did our forefathers comprehend that the multitude of people, properly employed, were the strength and wealth of the nation!

The system of legislation "which sought by artificial means to determine the price of goods, and fix the rate of wages, was unremittingly pursued in this and the next four or five reigns. Nay, so late as the time of Charles II., a bench of magistrates had power to determine in their respective counties what wages farm-labourers should receive per week; and it is only by slow degrees that sounder views of the office and functions of government have made themselves heard in the councils of the realm. The act giving this power, is the well-known statute 5 Elizabeth, c. 4, and it long continued in operation, with others of a similar character. Trade was, however, shaking off some of its trammels, and demands were being made for a higher rate of wages for many of the handicrafts, while complaints of the cupidity of capitalists were very bitter and severe. The dispute has continued till to-day, and as yet offers little hope of a happy and amicable termination." *

To show the progress of the people, we mention the following facts:—At various times, as in 1496 and 1514, acts were passed with the vain object of keeping down wages, attempts which, though they show very little progress in political economy, give evidence that, in proportion to labour, employers were more numerous than they had been. In 1500 the wages of a master mason were 6d. a-day; in 1575 they were doubled; and in 1590 they had reached 1s. 2d. The wages of common

* Langford—Eng. Democracy, p. 21.

labourers had risen from 6d. a-day to 10d. In 1511 the salary of a domestic priest was £3, 6s. 8d.; in 1545 it had risen to £4, 14s. 6d. In 1544 the wages of sailors in the royal navy were advanced from 5s. per month to 6s. 8d., and all other trades and professions exhibited a like advance in rates of wages and payment for labour. This of course was the result of the gradual rise in the prices of provisions, rents, and clothing—another proof that the people had become not only more numerous, but more luxurious, and therefore exigent of better diet and accommodation. Wheat, the great staple of the people's food, had advanced from 3s. 4d. a quarter in 1485, to 17s. in 1589; £2, 2s. in 1596; and £1, 7s. in 1599. It is true the price of wheat greatly varied in this period; but, except in a very few seasons, it never approached the low price of the previous century. In 1587, a year of much scarcity, it actually rose to £5, 4s. In 1500 a dozen pigeons were sold for 4d.; in 1541 they were not to be bought for less than 10d.; in 1590 they were 1s.; and in 1597, a year of scarcity, 4s. 3d. In 1500 a hundred eggs could be purchased for 6d.; in 1541 the price had risen to 1s. 2d.; and in 1597 they could not be obtained for less than 3s. A good fat goose in the year 1500 cost only 4d.; but in 1541 it cost 8d.; and in 1589, 1s. 2d. A fat sheep in 1500 was worth 1s. 8d.; in 1549 it sold at rates varying from 2s. 4d. to 4s.; and in 1597, the dear year, a sheep could not be had under 14s. 6d. In 1500 an ox could be purchased for 11s. or 12s.; in 1541 its price had advanced to from £1 to £2; in 1597 a single stone of beef was 2s., and a whole fat ox upwards of £5.

At the beginning of this period, the houses of

farmers were generally built of timber, and those of labourers of mud, or wattle and mud. Many of them had no chimneys, and some had only one for cooking. Trenchers and spoons of wood were used instead of pewter or earthenware; and a yeoman who had half a dozen pewter dishes in his house was looked upon as a wealthy man. The lodging of the people was generally inelegant and comfortless. Straw beds and pillows of chaff were most common; flock beds were a rural luxury. Farm-servants lay on straw, and often had not even a coverlet to throw over them. The bread of the poor was made of rye, barley, or oats, and in many places of peas or beans: the wealthy only ate of wheaten bread. Agricultural labourers, by the fireside in the evenings, after their day's work, made their own shoes, or prepared the yokes for oxen and their ploughing-gear. The women made ready the wool, and the hemp or flax for the weaver, at the spinning-wheel. They worked much in the fields, as they do now on the continent. The first of our writers on husbandry tells us, that it was the business of the farmer's wife "to winnow all manner of corn, to make malt, to wash, to make hay, shear corn, and in time of need help her husband to fill the muck-wain or dung-cart, drive the plough, to load hay or corn, to go to market and sell butter, or pigs, or fowls.* Latimer, who was a farmer's son, describes the advance in the value of land in his time. When he was young his father's farm was rented by him at four pounds a year; he employed half a dozen men upon it, and had one hundred sheep and thirty cows. His father managed to send him to school and college, and to give to each

* Fitzherbert.

of his daughters five pounds on her marriage. But, continues Latimer, at the time he wrote this, the same farm was charged sixteen pounds a year, or fourfold, and that the farmer of it could do nothing for his prince, himself, or his children, nor give a cup of drink to the poor.

The evil produced its own remedy. The scarcity of land raised the price of produce, and that stimulated men to the manuring and more perfect culture of the land. Towards the end of this period things greatly improved. Farmers and small builders became more painstaking and skilful. In the autumn they cured bacon and beef for the winter; and in summer they had abundance of veal, beef, mutton &c., which, Harrison tells us, they ceased to baste with lard in cooking, but basted with butter, or suffered the fattest to baste itself. With their living, their houses also improved. Wood or wattle, in the course of time, gave way to stone or brick; wooden trenchers were superseded at substantial tables by pewter plates; and, with the pewter, articles of silver began gradually to be introduced. Feather beds replaced straw and chaff mattresses; linen was used in greater abundance; and bed-covers and better clothing came into general use among the well-to-do. Coal was worked in considerable quantities, and the scarcity of wood was less felt in consequence.

Frequent mention is made by the writers of this period, of vagabond tribes which overran the country, carrying terror and crime wherever they went. Harrison says that, in the reign of Henry VIII., the king hanged, of robbers, thieves, and vagabonds, no fewer than 72,000; and that Elizabeth, in the latter part of her reign, sent

three or four hundred of them annually to the gallows. Henry passed many severe statutes, ordering the whipping, cutting off of ears, and hanging of those wretched people. Edward VI. ordered them to be branded with the letter V. (for villain) on the chest, and then to be handed over to masters, from whom, if they ran away, they were to be branded on the cheek with an S, for slave —any attempt to escape from such slavery being death. To mitigate this terrible state of things, Henry, in 1530, gave the sick and impotent permission to beg; and in 1535 magistrates and the clergy were ordered to make collections for their relief. These were the first approaches to a national poor-law. In 1562 Elizabeth passed an act making parochial assessments for the poor compulsory. The poor-law, therefore, in reality dates from that period; but, in 1601, the celebrated act of the 43rd of Elizabeth organized and completed that system of employing and maintaining the destitute poor, which has remained ever since the law of England.

Such was the sixteenth century in England—a period more remarkable than any which had gone before it, and which, with all its dark and repulsive features, was the gloomy dawn of the glorious day we now enjoy.*

* William Howitt.

CHAPTER VII.

Manners and Customs, &c., of the English from 1603 to the present time—during the reigns of James I., Charles I., the Commonwealth, Charles II., James II., William III. and Mary, Ann, the four Georges, William IV., and Victoria.

THE morality of the English, during the early part of the period now under review, was any thing but what it ought to have been. We have said elsewhere, that the national morality was extremely low "from the restoration of Charles II., in 1660, to the reign of George II.; a period of about seventy years. Then freedom of inquiry was detested—wit, learning, and morality despised—cant and hypocrisy were alone encouraged. In this period lived Pope, Swift, Dryden, Young, and Gay; and during this time the national morality was at its lowest ebb. The number of vices which well deserved to be asailed was so great, that it was an age well calculated to develop an assailing spirit in men of talent, learning, and eloquence. Authors were in a position to see the crimes and follies of all sorts of men, but especially men in high life. They found men busy in knavery and intrigue; pursuing selfish ends by unscrupulous means; looking upon virtue and honour as things of no importance whatever; counting religion as a very good thing for the poor, but of no use whatever to the rich; men hiding their hatred in a smile, and their infamy in a bow. These men saw that the star of the earl, the ermine of the judge, and the surplice of the priest, instead of representing truth, nobility, justice, and mercy, were badges of un-

godliness, blasphemy, infamy; in short, of feelings the most beggarly, bastardly, and cursed. Our own dramatists and foreign writers describe the morals and manners of women of rank as almost destitute of delicacy and probity. They are described as mingling with men in taverns, amid tobacco smoke, obscene songs, and conversation of the most ribald character. We are also told that they allowed freedoms which would startle the poorest women in our day; that they were desperate gamblers; and that both 'ladies and gentlemen in high life' made debauchery and villany quite fashionable. Gondomar, a Spanish ambassador, boasts of the effect of the bribes that he was accustomed to distribute amongst them. Howell tells us that the character of Englishmen on their travels was expressed in an Italian proverb—

'Inglese Italianato
E Diavolo incarnato'—

an Italianized Englishman is a devil incarnate! This saying arose from the debauched conduct of young Englishmen on their travels. At home they were a contemptible mixture of foppery and profanity. One of the men who led the fashion was the charming Buckingham, who went to Spain with Charles I. a wife-hunting." His extravagance, his amours, his haughty bearing, and unceremonious treatment of both his own prince and the grandees of Spain, astonished Madrid. He introduced the very worst people, men and women, into the palace, and would sit with his hat on when the prince himself was uncovered. His behaviour in the presence of the king of Spain was just as irreverent, and the minister, Olivarez, was so incensed at his insolence

that he detested him. He had the soul of an upstart lackey under the title of a duke, and was never easy unless he could outshine all the grandees of the Spanish court. He was perpetually importuning the king to send over orders, jewels, and money. Georges and garters were sent over in numbers to confer on different courtiers, and the constant cry of Buckingham's letters was jewels, jewels, jewels! He represented how rich the Spaniards were in jewels, and how poor those looked which they themselves already had. He describes the prince as quite poor in his appearance, compared with the Spanish splendour. "Sir, he hath neither chain nor hat-band, and I beseech you consider first how rich they are in jewels here; then in what a poor equipage he came in; how he hath no other means to appear like a king's son; how they are usefullest at such a time as this, when you may do yourself, your son, and the nation honour; and lastly, how it will neither cost nor hazard you any thing. These reasons, I hope, since you have already ventured your chiefest jewel, your son, will serve to persuade you to let loose these more after him:—first, your best hat-band, the Portugal diamond, the rest of the pendent diamonds to make up a necklace to give his mistress, and the best rope of pearl, with a rich chain or two for himself to wear, or else your dog must want a collar, which is the ready way to put him into it. There are many other jewels, which are of so mean quality as deserve not that name, but will save much in your purse, and serve very well for presents,"* &c. In a manuscript in the Harleian Library is given the following description of the dress of George

* Howitt--Pic. Hist. of Eng., Vol III., p. 96.

Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the prince of fops in the reign of James I. "It was common with him at any ordinary dancing to have his clothes trimmed with great diamond buttons, and to have diamond hat-bands, cockades, and earrings; to be yoked with great and manifold knots of pearl; in short, to be manacled, fettered, and imprisoned in jewels; insomuch that, in going to Paris in 1625, he had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, gold, and gems could contribute; one of which was a white uncut velvet, set all over, both suit and cloak, with diamonds, valued at fourteen thousand pounds, besides a great feather stuck all over with diamonds, as were also his sword, girdle, hat-band, and spurs." * Such was the character of dandy Buckingham!

It was at the beginning of the seventeenth century that fops and dandies patched their faces with black plaster, because the officers who had served in the German wars wore such patches to cover their scars. The ladies did the same, though from what motive is not apparent. The unmanly and insane practice of duelling was fashionable at this time, and prevailed more than at any other period before or since; it was a despicable remnant of the romantic chivalry for which the nation was formerly remarkable. Cheating at play was carried to a great extent, and the dandy effeminacy of the cavaliers was unexampled. For those whom they considered below them they exhibited the greatest contempt; and if any one assumed the style or courtesies of address which they appropriated to themselves, he was looked upon as if he had committed actual treason. The term Master,

* Planché.

or Mr., was only used to great merchants or commoners of distinction; and to address such persons as gentlemen or esquires would have roused all the ire of the aristocracy. We read that, in proceeding through the streets of London when dark, courtiers only were conducted with torches, merchants with links, and mechanics with lanterns. In James's reign family pride greatly prevailed, but from that time to the present it has gradually decreased; then the wealthy distinguished themselves from the poor by a conceited demeanour, and an expensive style of living, which consisted in pomp and show, and a numerous retinue, rather than in real convenience and true pleasure. The Earl of Nottingham, in his embassy to Spain, was attended by five hundred persons.

London was infested with a boisterous and villanous crew of thieves and cut-purses; pocket-picking was then, as now, taught as a science, and was carried to a wonderful perfection of dexterity. All sorts of rogueries were practised on country people. Those vagabonds had their retreats about the Savoy, in the Strand, and the brick-kilns of Islington. Their great head-quarters were in Whitefriars, which possessed the right of sanctuary, and swarmed with debtors, thieves, bullies, and every species of miscreants, who were ready, on an alarm made by the sound of a horn, to turn out in mobs and defend their associates from constables and sheriffs' officers. Walking in the streets during the daytime was dangerous, from the affrays often going on betwixt the apprentices and the students of the Temple, or between the butchers and weavers, or from the rude jostling and practical jokes of bullies. At night there was no safety, except under a strong guard. London

life at the beginning of this period was far from being either safe or agreeable; then the streets and alleys were very narrow, unpaved, and in a filthy state; the houses undrained and ill-ventilated, the result of which was the plague, a frequent visitant. We are told that kites and ravens were much kept to devour the offal and filth of the streets, instead of scavengers. In the country things were not much better; it was most unsafe to go on the roads alone, so many sturdy bands of robbers were there.

After the great fire, the city was improved in many respects; the streets were wider and the drainage better, but it was still badly lighted and disgraced by filthy kennels and caves of vice. Towards the end of Charles II.'s time, London was lighted by contract by one Herring, who undertook to place a lamp at every tenth door, when there was no moon, from six to twelve o'clock at night, from Michaelmas to Lady-Day; this was thought to be a wonderful advance! Whitefriars still continued the haunt of thieves, bullies, abandoned women, and many other classes, a disgrace to themselves and to society. The neighbourhood of Whitehall was little better; its inhabitants, however, styled themselves gentlemen! We read that these "gentlemen" often sallied into the streets in bands, breaking windows, tearing off knockers, defacing signs, upsetting stalls, storming taverns, beating quiet passengers, and rudely insulting respectable women. The watchmen kept out of the way; in extreme cases soldiers were called out to disperse the "gentlemen." In addition to these dangers of walking the city in the dark, was the common practice of emptying all sorts of filth out of the chamber windows, as done

in Edinburgh till lately, and as still practised in the smaller streets of Paris, and other towns on the continent.

Amongst the gloomy features of the early part of this period, is the relentless persecution of old women, under the belief that they were witches—a practice commenced by James I., but continued by the Puritans, who sent out Hopkins, the notorious witch-finder, who in the years 1645 and 1646 traversed the country, condemning and putting to death hundreds of them, till he himself was accused of being a wizard, and, as it seems to us, very justly shared a similar fate. From 1645 to the restoration, four thousand persons are said to have perished under charge of witchcraft. In this respect Scotland was even worse than England; indeed this strange and cruel delusion seems to have made a circuit through the civilized world.

We may imagine the feeling with which the sober and religious Puritans beheld all this, and the proud contempt with which their strictures were received. When the civil war broke out, which was a war of religious as much as of political reform, the Puritans displayed a grave manner, a sober-coloured dress, and chastened style of speech; and the cavaliers, in defiance and contempt, swore, drank, and indulged in debauchery all the more, to mark their superiority to the "sneaking roundhead dogs." * Charles I. endeavoured to restrain this loose, indecent, and disgusting spirit, but it was too strong for him; and, though the roundheads put it down during the Commonwealth, it came back in a flood with the lewd, ribald, and useless Charles II.—the man "who never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise

* William Howitt.

one." In the time of the Commonwealth all Maypoles, wakes, church-ales, and the like, which James I. had encouraged by his "Book of Sports," were put down by the Puritans. Till the death of the first Charles, the court festivals were marked by all the profusion, displays of jewellery, and of dresses of cloth of gold and embroidery, which prevailed in the grim old Tudor times. The old-fashioned country life, in which the gentlemen hunted and hawked, and the ladies spent their leisure time in giving bread to the poor, and making condiments, preserves, and distilled waters, was rapidly changing during the gay days of James I. and his son Charles, to the benefit only of a few court favourites. Hence it was high time for the Puritans to come into power, and to put both town and country under a more wholesome discipline. Cromwell's soldiers, quartered in different parts of London, and his major-generals, administering martial law in various parts of the country, soon altered the face of things. He shut up Spring Gardens, a place of nocturnal resort for unholy deeds and licentious talk; and instead of fellows prowling about the streets with sweetmeats in their pockets, to kidnap children and sell them to the plantations, he sent those scoundrels freely thither themselves.

However harsh and repulsive were the manners and social maxims of the Puritans, they were infinitely preferable to the vile licentiousness and blasphemy of the cavaliers, who mistook vulgarity and obscenity for gentility. The Puritans had a reverence for sound and Christian principles; virtue and moral piety were their admiration, however rudely they demonstrated it. On the other hand, the cavaliers gloried in every opposite

vice and vulgarity; their conversation, larded with oaths, would have disgraced the most uncouth trooper of our day. Macaulay, in speaking of these impious dandies, says—"The new band of wits and fine gentlemen, never opened their mouths without uttering a ribaldry of which a porter would now be ashamed, and without calling on their Maker to curse them, sink them, confound them, blast them, and damn them." And Somers bears testimony to the same effect. He says, "No man was accounted a gentleman, or person of any honour, that had not, in two hours sitting, invented some new modish oath, or found out the late intrigue between the Lord B. and the Lady P., laughed at the fopperies of priests, and made lampoons and drollery on the sacred scriptures themselves." With respect to drinking and gambling, those vices were beyond imagination, and the plunder of the people by the cavalier troopers was carried on as if they had been in an enemy's country.

But the Puritans carried their ideas of moral purity a little too far. They put all the arts under fear; and, says Macaulay, ordered that all representations of the Virgin Mother should be burned.

"Sculpture fared as ill as painting. Nymphs and graces, the work of Ionian chisels, were delivered over to Puritan stone-masons to be made decent. Against the lighter vices the ruling faction waged war with a zeal little tempered by humanity or by common-sense. Sharp laws were passed against betting. It was enacted that adultery should be punished with death. The illicit intercourse of the sexes, even where neither violence nor seduction was imputed, where no public scandal was

given, where no conjugal right was violated, was made a misdemeanour. Public amusements, from the masques which were exhibited at the mansions of the great, down to the wrestling matches and grinning matches on village greens, were vigorously attacked. One ordinance directed that all the Maypoles in England should forthwith be hewn down. Another proscribed all theatrical diversions. The playhouses were to be dismantled, the spectators fined, the actors whipped at the cart's tail. Ropedancing, puppetshows, bowls, horseracing, were regarded with no friendly eye. But bear-baiting, then a favourite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the wrath of the austere sectaries. It is to be remarked that their antipathy to this sport had nothing in common with the feeling which has, in our own time, induced the legislature to interfere for the purpose of protecting beasts against the wanton cruelty of men. The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. Indeed, he generally contrived to enjoy the double pleasure of tormenting both spectators and bear.

"Perhaps no single circumstance more strongly illustrates the temper of the precisians than their conduct respecting Christmas day. Christmas had been, from time immemorial, the season of joy and domestic affection, the season when families assembled, when children came home from school, when quarrels were made up, when carols were heard in every street, when every house was decorated with evergreens, and every table was loaded with good cheer. At that season all hearts not utterly destitute of kindness were enlarged and softened. At that season the poor were ad-

mitted to partake largely of the overflowings of the wealth of the rich, whose bounty was peculiarly acceptable on account of the shortness of the days, and of the severity of the weather. At that season the interval between landlord and tenant, master and servant, was less marked than through the rest of the year. Where there is much enjoyment there will be some excess: yet on the whole, the spirit in which the holiday was kept, was not unworthy of a Christian festival. The Long Parliament gave orders, in 1644, that the twenty-fifth of December should be strictly observed as a fast, and that all men should pass it in humbly bemoaning the great national sin which they and their fathers had so often committed on that day, by romping under the mistletoe, eating boar's head, and drinking ale flavoured with roasted apples. No public act at that time seems to have irritated the common people more. On the next anniversary of the festival formidable riots broke out in many places. The constables were resisted, the magistrates insulted, the houses of noted zealots attacked, and the proscribed service of the day openly read in the churches.

"Such was the spirit of the extreme Puritans, both Presbyterian and Independent. Oliver, indeed, was little disposed to be either a persecutor or a meddler. But Oliver, the head of a party, and consequently, to a great extent, the slave of a party, could not govern altogether according to his own inclinations. Even under his administration, many magistrates, within their own jurisdiction, made themselves as odious as Sir Hudibras, interfered with all the pleasures of the neighbourhood, dispersed festive meetings, and put fiddlers in the stocks. Still more formidable was the zeal

of the soldiers. In every village where they appeared there was an end of dancing, bell-ringing, and hockey. In London they several times interrupted theatrical performances, at which the protector had the judgment and good-nature to connive.

"With the fear and hatred inspired by such a tyranny, contempt was largely mingled. The peculiarities of the Puritan, his look, his dress, his dialect, his strange scruples, had been, ever since the time of Elizabeth, favourite subjects with mockers. But these peculiarities appeared far more grotesque in a faction which ruled a great empire, than in obscure and persecuted congregations. The cant which had moved laughter when it was heard on the stage from Tribulation Wholesome, and Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, was still more laughable when it proceeded from the lips of generals and councillors of state. It is also to be noted that, during the civil troubles, several sects had sprung into existence, whose eccentricities surpassed any thing that had before been seen in England. A mad tailor, named Ludowick Muggleton, wandered from pothouse to pothouse, tippling ale, and denouncing eternal torments against those who refused to believe, on his testimony, that the Supreme Being was only six feet high, and that the sun was just four miles from the earth." *

But the example of the Puritans has not been without its good, or altogether lost upon succeeding generations. From the accession of "good Queen Anne" to the present day, the morality of the English has greatly improved; and though it is now hardly what it ought to be, considering the

* Macaulay's History of England—Vol. I., pp. 161-4.

vast number of men who profess to preach Christianity, yet for religion, morality, courage, honesty, sobriety, and manliness, old England ranks first in the great family of nations.

From the times of Harry the Eighth to the revolution in 1688, the sports common to the great mass of the people remained much as before. But among the higher classes gambling rose to such fever heat that many great estates were squandered at cards. The Duke of St. Albans, when more than eighty years of age, and quite blind, used to sit at the gambling table from day to day, with a man beside him to tell him the cards. Billiards, chess, backgammon, and cribbage, were much played; bowls, ninepins, boat-racing, running at the ring, were sports which all classes of people enjoyed. Ladies joined in playing at bowls—skating was introduced by some courtiers who had spent much time in Holland—and swimming and foot races were fashionable. Hunting was the favourite pastime of James I., and therefore was not likely to be neglected by the country gentry. He was also fond of hawking, and kept that diversion alive for a time, though from its very nature it was destined soon to go out of fashion. Ball games had much superseded the jousts and tournaments of past times. Tennis was in high favour, and pall-mall, or striking a ball through a ring suspended to a pole, was becoming "fashionable." Bowling, cards, dice, dancing, masques, balls, and musical entertainments, varied town life. Working-people stuck to their foot-ball, quoits, pitching the bar, cricket, shovel-board, bull and bear baiting, and cock-fighting. The Puritans put down May-games, Whitsun-ales, morris-dances, and all amusements that

Shooting.

savoured of a Catholic origin. They also, as we have seen, suppressed, as far as they could, the savage sports of bear and bull baiting. Hewson and Pride killed all the bears at the bear-garden to put an end to that cruel pastime, and thence originated Butler's *Hudibras*. The bowling-greens of the English were famous, and horse-racing was much in vogue. In Scotland the Reformation put to flight all sorts of games, dancing, and merry-makings, as sinful and unbecoming of Christians, and polemic discussions were the only excitements which varied the ascetic gloom.*

Since 1688, the diversions and manners of the English have undergone a considerable change. Their ancient hospitality is no more, and many favourite diversions are now forgotten. Those remaining to us are operas, dramatic exhibitions, and masquerades—hunting, racing, and dancing—foot-ball, cricket, and some others. Concerts of music, card-playing, angling, fowling, coursing, tennis, billiards, chess, draughts, skittles, quoits, &c., &c., are familiar to the English. "Ringing of bells is a species of music which the English boast of having carried to perfection."† The athletic diversion of cricket is still kept up, and practised by people of all classes. Rowing is an amusement peculiar to the Britons. The present game laws have deprived many people of a diversion, without answering the purposes of the wealthy, by whom and for whom they were passed.

"One of the peculiar diversions practised by the gentlemen of Scotland is the *goff*, which requires an equal degree of art and strength. It

* Pict. Hist. of Eng.—Vol. III., p. 404.
† Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain, p. 321.

is played with a bat and a ball; the latter is smaller and harder than a cricket ball; the bat is of a taper construction, till it terminates in the part that strikes the ball, which is loaded with lead, and faced with horn. An expert player will send the ball a very long distance at one stroke; each party follows his ball upon an open heath, and he who strikes it with fewest strokes into a hole, wins the game. The diversion of *hurling* is, perhaps, peculiar to the Scots. It is performed upon ice with large flat stones, often from twenty to two hundred pounds weight each, which they hurl from a common stand to a mark at a certain distance; and whoever is nearest to the mark is the victor."*

The history of the stage is a subject of great philosophical curiosity, as it is in every nation closely connected with the history of manners. Even from the modes of playing in different ages there is something to be learned.

The English stage has long held a high place among the amusements of the people. The man to whom it is most indebted is the immortal William Shakespeare, who was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in the year 1564. The genius of Shakespeare appears to penetrate into all departments of knowledge, and his instincts to possess an universal accuracy. Whether he describes the beauties of nature at large, or enters the haunts of busy life, high or low, royal, noble, or plebeian, or sends his all-searching glance into the depths of the human mind, or the strange intricacies of human nature, we are equally astonished at the clearness of his perceptive faculties, and the justness of his conclusions. His genius is what the

* Adams—New Hist. of Great Britain.

Germans term spherical, or many-sided. He had not a brilliancy in one direction only, but he seemed like a grand mirror, in which is truly reflected every image that falls on it. Outward nature, inner life and passion, town and country, all the features of human nature as exhibited in every grade of life—from the cottage to the throne—are in him expressed with a truth and a natural strength, that awake in us precisely the same sensations as nature itself. The receptivity of his mind was as quick, as vast, as perfect, as his power of expression was unlimited. Every object once seen appeared photographed on his spirit, and he reproduced these life-like images in new combinations, and mingled with such an exuberance of wit, of humour, of delicious melodies, and of exquisite poetry, as hath no parallel in the whole range of literature, including all ages and all countries. The "learned" have always been astonished that he could be all this without an academic education, as if the academy of God's universe did not include all lesser colleges, and as if God needed lectures and masters to instruct those whom he chooses to inform himself, and to produce as his elect and peculiar oracles.*

Taking the dramatic writing of the early part of this period altogether, it has never been surpassed, and in Shakespeare it has never been equalled.

Our tragic actors, before Garrick's appearance, had but an imperfect knowledge of their business; there was little that was real about them. But as soon as Garrick set his foot on the stage, this difficulty in a great measure vanished. His sound judgment, good taste, keen sensibility, insight into human nature, united to most expressive features—

* William Howitt.

a bright eye, quick ear, and exquisite voice, soon placed him at the head of his profession. Other actors imitated his easy and natural manners, and thereby the theatre became greatly improved. This new style of acting produced a better taste in writing, which, though less ribald and licentious, yet was not more faithful to nature.

Amongst the ancients, music formed an essential part of the dramatic entertainments. Amongst the moderns, especially the English, it was for a long time only an occasional auxiliary. The first successful piece of music on the English stage was the "Beggar's Opera," the author of which was Gay, the poet and fabulist. It is said to have been written in ridicule of the Italian opera. Gay adapted the words of his songs to *native* tunes instead of Italian ones. These tunes had been heard by most of the audience in early life, when the mind was free from care—in the scenes of rural innocence, or the walks of gay frolic. Every tune recalled some agreeable feeling, or previous happy state of mind; so that the effect of the music was quite magical. Handel brought on the English stage a new sort of musical drama, to which he gave the name of *Oratorio*.

The theatre of our day is very much superior to the stage at the beginning of this period. Managers and players have much more taste than was possessed by those of former days; actors and actresses are not so grossly immoral as they used to be, and the plays themselves contain little, and in most cases nothing, at all objectionable. The theatre, properly used, is capable of working a great good, as well as of affording much amusement.

"The costume of the reign of James I. was

little more than a continuation of the dress of the latter part of Elizabeth's. The increase in size, from the quantity of stuffing used in the garments, we may partly trace to the pusillanimous character of the new monarch."* A contemporary of James I. informs us that that monarch had "his clothing made large, and even the doublets quilted, for fear of—stellets; his breeches in great plaits and full stuffed. He was naturally of a timorous disposition, which was the greatest reason of his quilted doublets." †

The ruff was occasionally exchanged for a wide stiff collar, standing out horizontally and squarely, made of the same stuff, and starched and wired as usual, but plain instead of plaited or pinched, and sometimes edged, like the ruff, with lace. These collars were called bands. Towards the close of James's reign, however, we perceive a slight alteration in costume. Short jackets or doublets, with tails and false sleeves hanging behind, succeed to the long-waisted doublets; and the hose, instead of being slashed or laced, were covered with loose broad straps, richly embroidered or adorned with buttons, and discovering the silk or velvet trunk at the narrow intervals between them. The stockings were gartered beneath the knee, and the garters fastened in a large bow or rosette on one side. The loose Gallic hosen were still worn, and fastened to the doublet or jacket just above the tabs by innumerable points.‡

John Taylor, the water-poet, reprobates the spendthrift and the gallant, who

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, pp. 349-50.
† Dalzel—"Fragments of Scottish History."
‡ Planché

"Wear a farm in shoe-strings edged with gold,
And spangled garters worth a copyhold;
A hose and doublet which a lordship cost;
A gaudy cloak three mansions' price almost;
A beaver band and feather on the head,
Prized at the church's tythe, the poor man's bread."

Silk, worsted, and thread stockings were now almost universally worn, and cloth or woollen stockings were considered unfashionable.

The ladies in the reign of James I. still wore the stiff Elizabethan farthingale, elevated collar, and hair dressed in the lofty style. In this respect, the queen of James was Elizabeth over again. In the old play called "Lingua; or, the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for superiority," published in 1607, we have a curious list of the articles of a lady's wardrobe. One of the characters says—"Five hours ago, I sent a dozen maids to attire a boy like a nice gentlewoman, but there is such doing with their looking-glasses; pinning, unpinning; setting, unsetting; formings and conformings; painting of blue veins and cheeks. Such a stir with sticks, combs, cascanets, dressings, purls, fall squares, busks, bodices, scarfs, necklaces, carcanets, rabatoes, borders, tires, fans, palisadoes, puffs, ruffs, cuffs, muffs, pusles, fusles, partlets, friglets, bandlets, fillets, corslets, pendulets, amulets, annulets, bracelets, and so many *lets* —*i. e.*, stops or hindrances—that she is scarce dressed to the girdle; and now there is such calling for fardingales, kirtles, busk-points, shoe-ties, and the like, that seven pedlars' shops, nay, all Stourbridge fair, will scarcely furnish her. A ship is sooner rigged by far than a gentlewoman made ready!"

The reign of Charles I. introduces us to the most elegant and picturesque costume ever worn

in England. It is sometimes termed the Vandyke dress, from the circumstance of its being the costume of the time in which Vandyke painted. This costume is the best adapted for the stage, and is therefore generally selected for such plays as are not fixed by their subject to some other particular time. In Ben Jonson's comedy of the "New Inn," first acted in 1629, a beau observes—

> "I would put on
> The Savoy chain about my neck, the ruff,
> The cuffs of Flanders; then the Naples hat
> With the Rome hat-band, and the Florentine agate,
> The Milan sword, the cloak of Geneva set
> With Brabant buttons; all my given pieces,
> My gloves, the natives of Madrid," &c.

The same writer, in his "Tale of a Tub," mentions "long sawsedge hose, and breeches pinned up like pudding-bags;" and long breeches, in imitation of the Dutch fashion, are said to have been worn by Charles I. and others. At the commencement of the civil war, when the royalist party began to be denominated Cavaliers, and the republican Roundheads, the costume of England was as divided as its opinions; but the dress of the cavalier was gallant and picturesque in the extreme. It consisted of a doublet of silk, satin, or velvet, with large loose sleeves, slashed up the front—the collar covered by a falling band of the richest point lace, with that peculiar edging now called Vandyke. A short cloak was worn carelessly on one shoulder. The long breeches, fringed or pointed, met the tops of the wide boots, which were also ruffled with lace or lawn. A broad-leafed Flemish beaver hat, with a rich hat-band and plume of feathers, was set on one side of the head, and a Spanish rapier hung from

a most magnificent baldrick or sword-belt, worn sash-wise over the right shoulder. The doublet of silk or velvet was frequently exchanged in those troublesome times for a buff coat, which was richly laced. Sometimes it was embroidered with gold or silver, and encircled by a broad silk or satin scarf tied in a large bow, either behind or over the hip. The beard was worn very peaked, with small upturned mustaches; the hair long, and probably sometimes powdered. John Owen, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, appears, in the year 1652, "in querpo like a young scholar, with powdered hair, snake-bone bandstrings, a lawn band, a large set of ribands pointed at the knees, Spanish leather boots with large lawn tops, and his hat most curiously cocked,"—a dress suitable for a dandy, but, as Strutt observes, "improper enough for a clergyman." In a portrait of Charles I. by Vandyke, the king wears a jewel in one ear only. The dress of that great man, Oliver Cromwell, is thus described by Sir Philip Warwick—"The first time that I ever took notice of him was in the beginning of Parliament held in November 1640, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young gentleman, for we courtiers valued ourselves much upon our good clothes. I came one morning into the house well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled; for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar; his hat was without a hat-band; his stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side."

The female costume at the commencement of Charles I.'s reign underwent no great change. The following is "a catalogue" of the apparel and ornaments of a fantastical lady of fashion, from a play said to have been first acted in 1631. The speaker acknowledges it to be "as tedious as a tailor's bill;" but, being interesting, we give it. He is commanded to provide—

"Chains, coronets, pendans, bracelets, and ear-rings;
Pins, girdles, spangles, embroyderies, and rings;
Shadowes, rebatoes, ribbands, ruffs, cuffs, falls,
Scarfes, feathers, fans, maskes, muffs, laces, cauls,
Thin tiffanies, cobweb lawn, and fardingals,
Sweet fals, vayles, wimples, glasses, crisping-pins,
Pots of ointment, combes, with poking-sticks, and bodkines,
Coyfes, gorgets, fringes, rowles, fillets, and hair-laces,
Silks, damasks, velvets, tinsels, cloth of gold,
Of tissues with colours of a hundred fold;
But in her tyres, so new-fangled is she,
That which doth with her humour now agree,
To-morrow she dislikes; now doth she sweare,
That a loose body is the neatest weare;
But ere an houre be gone she will protest,
A strait gowne graces her proportion best;
Now calls she for a boisterous fardingal,
Then to her hips she'll have her garments fall;
Now doth she praise a sleeve that's long and wide,
Yet by and by that fashion doth deride;
Sometimes she applauds a pavement-sweeping traine,
And presently dispraiseth it againe;
Now she commends a shallow bande so small,
That it may seem scarce any bande at all;
But soon to a new fancy doth she reele,
And calls for one as big as a coach-wheele:
She'll wear a flowing coronet to-day,
The symball of her beauty's sad decay;
To-morrow she a waving plume will try,
The emblem of all female levitie:
Now in her hat, then in her hair is drest;
Now, of all fashions, she thinks change the best:
Nor in her weeds alone is she so nice,
But rich perfumes she buys at any price;
Storax and spikenard she burns in her chamber,
And daubs herself with civit, musk, and amber;
Waters she hath to make her face to shine,
Confections eke to clarify her skin:

Lip-salves, and clothes of a rich scarlet dye
She hath which to her cheeks she doth apply;
Ointment, wherewith she pargets o'er her face,
And lustrifies her beauty's dying grace," &c., &c.

Soon afterwards, however, the ladies' dresses of Charles's time rapidly changed from the stiff ruffs and fardingales, &c, to a more natural and elegant style. With Mrs. Turner, the introducer, went out the yellow starch ruffs and bands in James I.'s reign. "It is well that the fashion died at the gallows with her that was the supposed inventrix of it." * So great was the change in the costume of the ladies, that a lady of that day would scarcely be distinguished from a lady of this; the dress fell naturally without hoops, and the broad collar fell gracefully on the shoulders. The citizens' and puritans' wives, as well as country women, wore the broad high-crowned hat. Country women still appeared in plaited ruffs, also with a muffler over the mouth in cold weather tied up to the back of the head. It was then customary for the ladies to carry their feather fans in their hands, as those of our day carry their parasols.

Planché says—"With the restoration of the house of Stuart, fashion also regained the throne, from which she had been driven by the stern and puritanical republicans, and, like the 'merry monarch' with whom she returned, many were the mad pranks she played in the delirium of her joy; many the excesses she committed. Taste and elegance were abandoned for extravagance and folly; and the male costume, which in the time of Charles I. had reached the highest point of picturesque splendour, degenerated and declined from this moment, and expired in the square coat,

* Bulwer—Pedigree of the English Gallant.

cocked hat, full-bottomed wig, and jack-boots of the following century.*

Periwigs, or, as Holme hath it, *perawickes*, date their origin from the reign of Charles II. It appears that, when the king was a little boy, he had remarkably beautiful hair, which hung in long waving curls upon his shoulders, and the courtiers, out of compliment to their young sovereign, had heads of false hair made to imitate his natural locks, which obtained the name of perukes. When the king reached manhood, he returned the compliment by adopting the article himself, and the perruque or peruke speedily lodged upon the heads and shoulders of all the gentlemen of Britain, under the corrupted appellation of a periwig. Charles II. wrote a letter to the University of Cambridge, forbidding the members to wear periwigs, smoke tobacco, and read their sermons! †

It must be remembered, however, that false hair was worn by both sexes, and in great profusion, during the reigns of Elizabeth and her successor. So extraordinary a thing as the periwig, of course, demanded a different covering to the high-crowned hat or broad-leafed Spanish sombrero. Down went the crown and up went the brims at the sides, a row of feathers was placed round it in lieu of the chivalric plume, and the first approach was made to the cocked hats of the eighteenth century.

The following is a description of a gentleman's dress by Randal Holmes, written in 1659:—"A short-waisted doublet and petticoat-breeches, the lining being lower than the breeches, is tied above the knees; the breeches are ornamented with rib-

* Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 375–6.

† Vide Strutt's Dress and Habits, Vol. II.; and Hone's Everyday Book, Vol. I.

ands up to the pocket, and half their breadth upon the thigh; the waistband is set about with ribands, and the shirt hanging out over them." In an inventory of apparel provided for Charles II., in 1679, we find a complete suit of one material under the familiar designation of coat, waistcoat, and breeches. Pantaloons are mentioned in the same inventory, and a yard and a half of lutestring allowed for them. Holland drawers, and flannel and cotton trousers, are also amongst the items. In 1666 the king declared in counsel his intention of adopting a certain dress, which he was resolved never to alter! It consisted of a long close vest of black cloth or velvet, pinked with white satin; a loose coat over it of the Polish fashion, and, instead of shoes and stockings, buskins or brodequins. Cravats or neckcloths of Brussels and Flanders lace were worn towards the end of Charles II.'s reign: they were tied in a knot under the chin, the ends hanging down square.

The "beauties" in the reign of the second Charles were the very reverse of their mothers, both in dress and demeanour. A studied negligence, and elegant dishabille, is the prevailing character of the costume in which most of them are represented—"Their glossy ringlets, escaping from a simple bandeau of pearls, or adorned by a single rose, fall in graceful profusion upon snowy necks, unveiled by even the transparent lawn of the band or the partlet; and the fair round arm, bare to the elbow, reclines upon the voluptuous satin petticoat; while the gown, of the same rich material, piles up its voluminous train in the background."*

In the two brief reigns of James II. and

* Planché—Hist. of Brit. Costume, p. 386.

William III., there was very little alteration in the civil costume. "The petticoat-breeches were again exchanged for those which tied beneath the knee; but the latter were made to sit closer than of yore, and the stockings drawn over them to the middle of the thigh. The periwig became more monstrous, and it was the fashion for the beaux to comb their perukes publicly, for which purpose large combs of ivory or tortoise-shell, curiously chased and ornamented, were carried in the pocket as constantly as the snuff-box, which had latterly also become an indispensable appendage to a fine gentleman. At court, in the mall, and in the boxes of the theatre, a gallant of these days combed his peruke, during a conversation or flirtation, with the same air that a modern exquisite would twirl his mustaches. The full-bottomed wig was worn by the learned professions, and those who affected particular gravity." *

The broad-falling bands were succeeded by the small Geneva bands, like those worn by our modern clergymen and councillors, "except that, instead of being two small pieces worn for distinction merely, they were *bonâ fide* collars, the ends of which hung negligently out over the waistcoat." Neckcloths were worn by "exquisites" exceedingly long, and the ends passed through the waistcoat button-holes. Shoe-buckles began to displace the rosettes—buckles for shoes are mentioned as early as the time of Edward IV.

The costume of the fair sex remained unaltered during the reign of James II., but some Dutch fashions appear to have followed the court of William and Mary. The bosom was again consigned to the guardianship of the ugly stomacher.

* Planchê.

The hair was now combed up from the forehead like a rising billow, and surmounted by piles of ribands and lace, disposed in regular and alternate tiers, &c. This head-gear was sometimes called a tower!

"The reign of Queen Anne vanished every relic of our chivalric costume except the sword, which still, in our own day, completes the full dress of the court of St. James's."

"Square-cut coats and long-flapped waistcoats with pockets in them, the latter meeting the stockings, still drawn up over the knee so high as to entirely conceal the breeches, but gartered below it; large hanging cuffs and lace ruffles; the skirts of the coats stiffened out with wire or buckram, from between which peeped the hilt of the sword, deprived of the broad and splendid belt in which it swung in the preceding reigns; blue or scarlet silk stockings with gold or silver clocks; lace neckcloths; square-toed short-quartered shoes, with high red heels and small buckles; very long and formally-curled perukes, black riding-wigs, bag-wigs, and nightcap-wigs; small three-cornered hats laced with gold or silver galloon, and sometimes trimmed with feathers, composed the habit of the noblemen and gentlemen during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I." *

In the reigns of the first, second, and third Georges, hats appear to have undergone the most changes. The old three-cornered cocked hat "has found a temporary refuge on the heads of the state-coachmen of our royal and noble families." The wig, too, was doomed to feel the influence of the French revolution. During the latter half of the 18th century, it gradually diminished in size: the

* Planché.

practice of frizzing, plastering, and powdering the hair, till it was at least as ugly as a wig, has even in our own time a few faithful followers. Hair-powder maintained its ground till 1793, when it was discarded by Queen Charlotte and the princesses, and soon afterwards disappeared from the toilet of every lady.

The square-cut coat and long-flapped waistcoat of the reign of Queen Anne and the first two Georges, underwent an alteration about the middle of the reign of their successor. The skirts were unstiffened, the waists shortened, and the cut of the present court suit introduced. Cloth became the general material for the coat, and velvet, silk, satin, and embroidery were reserved for court dresses, or waistcoats and breeches only. The latter were, from the close of George the Second's reign, worn over the stocking as at present, and fastened first by buckles and afterwards by strings. The shoes were worn with longer quarters and larger buckles. About the year 1777, the buttons of the coat, and the buckles on the shoes, were worn of an enormous size. A beau with steel buttons dazzling a lady, was the subject of a caricature in that year. The lace cravat was abandoned about 1735, and a black riband worn round the neck, tied in a large bow in front. To this succeeded white cambric stocks, buckled behind; and to them, about 1789, the modern muslin cravat, in which it was, at one time, the fashion to bury the chin. About the same period the shirt-collar appeared, and the ruffle vanished. The coat was made with lapels and a tail, being cut square in front above the hips, as well as the waistcoat, which, deprived of its flaps, was soon made as ridiculously short as it had previously

been unnecessarily long. Pantaloons and Hessian boots were introduced about the end of the century; but from this time the fashions are in the recollection of some of our readers. Short boots and loose trousers, the result of the visit of the Cossacks to London, have, together with frock-coats, rendered our costume more convenient and less formal; and could we exchange the heavy and tasteless beaver hat for some light and more elegant head-covering, the dress of the present day, if not so picturesque as that of Charles I.'s time, would at least have comfort and durability to recommend it; and an Englishman, instead of being caricatured, as of yore, with a pair of shears in his hand, as uncertain what fashion to adopt, might remain contented, and described as—

> "An honest man close button'd to the chin,
> Broad-cloth without, and a warm heart within."*

In the time of Charles I. long beards were reduced to a small pointed lock of hair—in the reign of James II. mustaches only remained—and both have been discontinued since the time of the third William, and only very lately revived. Dr. Elliotson, in speaking of shaving the beard, says, (in his Human Physiology, 5th edit.)—"It cannot but be a custom most insulting to nature to shave off the beard, which, if kept in proper trim, as birds and beasts instinctively keep their plumage and hair in good order, completes the perfection of man's face, and the external distinction of the sexes; and, whatever ladies pretend to the contrary, renders him far more attractive to women—at any rate when custom has had time to lessen their seeming repugnance; for their preference to men with good whiskers is certain. Shaving was

*Planché.

forbidden by Moses, and therefore, according to Jews and Christians, by God; it was a severe punishment among the Indians, and an irreparable insult among the Germans. The Osmanli swears by his beard, and spends half his day upon it. Shaving prevails in Europe because the kings of France set the example to their courtiers, who were followed by the nation, which formerly gave the *ton* to neighbouring nations, and therefore was at length followed by all in this troublesome and unmanly fashion."

Mrs. Damer, the eccentric and celebrated sculptor, is said to have been the first female who wore black silk stockings in England.

Of course we do not pretend to have gone fully into the subject of British costume; the size of this volume will not permit it. We may here remark, that fashion has been such a varying goddess, that neither history, tradition, nor painting, has been able to preserve all her mimic forms. In and about the year 1735, a lady's dress was short, and very much like a great drum; and in 1745 it was even wider. Indeed, the fashions of women's dresses are like a weathercock, always changing and never fixed. Ridiculous as women make themselves in our day through the use of crinoline, neck-hole bonnets, &c. &c., we find in history, that since the Norman Conquest the much worshipped goddess Fashion has ever been most changeable.

Should the reader wish to know something more of the national costume of Scotland and Ireland, we gladly recommend Froissart's "Chronicles," Buchanan's "History of Scotland," Camden's "History of Elizabeth," and Planché's excellent work on British costume—a work from which we

have given many extracts, and to the writer of which we have been greatly indebted.

At the commencement of this period—indeed until recently—there were few coaches except in and about large towns, and in winter the roads were generally impassable. On all but the main highways, pack-horses carried the necessary merchandize from place to place through deep narrow tracks, some of which remain to this day. It required four or five days to reach London by coach from Chester, York, or Bristol, and that attended by perils and discomforts which made travellers loth to encounter such a journey, and often to make their wills before starting. Macaulay has summed up the terrors, &c., of the road, as given by our diarists, in a passage which we quote:—"On the best lines of communication the ruts were deep, the descents precipitous, and the ways often such that it was hardly possible to distinguish them in the dusk from the unenclosed heath and fens on both sides. Ralph Thoresby, the antiquary, was in danger of losing his way on the great north road between Barnby Moor and Tuxford, and actually lost his way between Doncaster and York; Pepys and his wife, travelling in their own coach, lost their way between Newberry and Reading. In the course of the same tour they lost their way near Salisbury, and were in danger of having to pass the night on the plain. It was only in fine weather that the whole breadth of the road was available for wheeled vehicles. Often the mud lay deep on the right and the left, and only a narrow track of firm ground rose above the quagmire. At such times obstructions and quarrels were frequent, and the pass was frequently blocked up during a long

time by carriers, neither of whom would give way. It happened almost every day that coaches stuck fast, until a team of cattle could be procured from some neighbouring farm, to tug them out of the slough. But in bad seasons the travellers had to encounter inconveniences still more serious. Thoresby, who was in the habit of travelling between Leeds and the capital, has recorded in his diary such a series of perils and disasters as might suffice for a journey to the Frozen Ocean, or to the desert of Sahara. On one occasion he learned that the floods were out between Ware and London, that passengers had to swim for their lives, and that a higgler had perished in the attempt to cross. In consequence of these tidings he turned out of the highroad, and was conducted across some meadows, when it was necessary for him to ride to the skirts in water. In the course of another journey, he narrowly escaped being swept away by an inundation of the Trent. He was afterwards detained at Stamford four days, on account of the state of the roads, and then ventured to proceed only because fourteen members of the House of Commons, who were going up in a body to parliament, with guides and numerous attendants, took him into their company. On the roads of Derbyshire, travellers were in constant fear for their necks, and were frequently compelled to alight and lead their beasts. The great route through Wales to Holyhead was in such a state that, in 1685, a viceroy going to Ireland was five hours travelling fourteen miles, from St. Asaph to Conway. Between Conway and Beaumaris he was forced to walk a great part of the way, and his lady was carried in a litter. His coach was, with much difficulty, and, by the help of many

hands, brought after him entire. In general, carriages were taken to pieces at Conway, and borne on the shoulders of stout Welsh peasants to the Menai straits. In some parts of Kent and Sussex none but the strongest horses could, in winter, get through the bog, in which at every step they sunk deep. The markets were often inaccessible during several months. It is said the fruits of the earth were sometimes suffered to rot in one place; while in another place, distant only a few miles, the supply fell short of the demand. The wheeled carriages in this district were generally pulled by oxen. When Prince George of Denmark visited the stately mansion of Petworth, in wet weather, he was six hours going nine miles; and it was necessary that a body of sturdy hinds should be on each side of his coach, in order to prop it. Of the carriages which conveyed his retinue, several were upset and injured. A letter from one of the party has been preserved, in which the unfortunate courtier complains that, during fourteen hours, he never once alighted, except when his coach was overturned or stuck fast in the mud."

People in those times travelled very much on horseback, to avoid the nuisance of carriages on such wretched roads; but then it was necessary to go well armed, and if possible in company, for the country was infested by highwaymen. To abate the difficulties of the road, the turnpike system was adopted in the time of Charles II., and what were called flying coaches were put on the amended ways, which were certainly an improvement.

At the beginning of the period under consideration, the interior of houses was greatly embellished,

and the splendour of bed and window hangings had strikingly increased. Rich velvets and silks, embroidered with cloth of gold and cloth of silver, and coloured satins abounded, of the most gorgeous hues. The cushions of couches and chairs were equally costly; and, instead of the ancient tapestry, paper and leather hangings, richly stamped and gilt, covered the walls. The Flemish artists had been called in to decorate the ceilings with historic or mythologic scenes, and on the walls hung *les chef d'œuvres* of Flemish and Italian art. Carpets were beginning to supersede rushes on the floors, but were more commonly used as coverings for tables. In addition to the carved cabinets of oak, ebony, and ivory, and the richly cushioned high-backed chairs of the Tudor dynasty, Flemish and Dutch furniture of somewhat formal but still elegant design abounded. Superb ornaments of ivory and china had found their way from the East, and became heirlooms in large mansions. Altogether, the houses of the wealthy of those times presented a scene of stately elegance and luxury that has not since been surpassed.*

Smoking and snuff-taking became common in the reign of James I. The fashion of smoking was so strong, that James I. could get no one to preach against it; he therefore took up the pen and wrote a treatise, which he denominates "A Counterblast to Tobacco." We give one extract from the work, which shows what the author thought of smoking. "It is a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottom-

* Pic Hist. of Eng.—Vol. III., p. 405.

less." Smoking and drunkenness greatly prevailed in the reign of George II.; gentlemen rarely met at dinner without "wetting their clay," not a little too much. In No. 344 of the *Spectator*, the practice of taking snuff is mentioned as one that "fine ladies" had lately fallen into.

Though the country life was much more generally embraced by the wealthy at the commencement of this period than it is at the present day; yet the increase of arts, social commerce, and pleasure, was just beginning to produce an inclination for the more civilized city life. The first James did what he could to discourage this alteration. He often said to them—"Gentlemen, at London you are like ships in a sea, which shew like nothing; but in your country villages you are like ships in a river, which look like great things." Any one acquainted with the history of the shrewd but conceited and vain James, sees at once his motive for giving such unasked for advice. He well knew that, if the wealthy class lived in London, they would get more sensible of their own strength, and might indulge too curious researches into matters connected with the government; but, if they were dispersed to their respective country-houses, they would bear a more submissive reverence to his authority, and receive less support from each other.

Carriages, hackney-coaches, and sedan-chairs became common at the beginning of this period. The first sedan-chair in England was used by the foppish Buckingham, to the great indignation of the people, who said that he was employing his fellow-creatures to do the work of beasts. In the reign of George II., ladies and gentlemen attended parties in sedan-chairs.

Copper halfpence and farthings were first coined in the reign of James I. The silver pennies having disappeared, tradesmen were obliged to carry on their retail business chiefly by means of brass and leaden tokens, which in 1613 were prohibited. The second James coined gold pieces of the value of £5. George III. was the first who issued penny and twopenny pieces. Cromwell's coins exceed any of that period in beauty and workmanship. In the reign of James I., the interest of money was fixed at ten per cent.; in 1624, the last year of his reign, it was reduced to eight per cent.; and in 1651 it was fixed by parliament at six per cent., at which it remained till the time of Queen Anne, when it was fixed at five per cent.

At the commencement of this period gardening was more generally attended to than formerly; and both culinary vegetables and flowers were introduced. Samuel Hartlib, a Pole, who was patronised by the immortal Cromwell, wrote various treatises on agriculture, and relates that in his time old men recollected the first gardener who went into Surrey to plant cabbages, cauliflowers, and artichokes, and to sow early peas, turnips, carrots, and parsnips. Till then, almost all the supply of these things in London was imported from Holland and Flanders. About the year 1650, cherries, apples, pears, hops, cabbages, and liquorice were much cultivated, and soon superseded the necessity of importation; but Hartlib informs us that onions were still scarce, and that the supply of stocks of apple, pear, cherry, chestnut, and vine trees was very small, through the want of sufficient nurseries for them. There was a great desire to cultivate tobacco, and to introduce the

production of raw silk, but the endeavour proved abortive. It was owing to the introduction of mulberry-trees and silkworms that we have now such a general diffusion of the mulberry-tree in this country.

In the reign of James I. the Bible was re-translated by forty-seven theologians. They commenced their work in 1607, and the scriptures were published in 1611. Since then there has been no authorized alteration. A fourth translation of the scriptures was made, because the language of Wicliffe's Bible was nearly obsolete, and Coverdale's Bible was translated from defective Latin copies, which could scarcely be depended upon. James had the scriptures translated from the original languages; the Old Testament from Hebrew, and the New Testament from Greek—of course, with the assistance of the existing translations.

In the reign of James I. some Roman Catholics entered into a plot—called the Gunpowder plot—to murder the king as well as all the lords and commons, by blowing them up with gunpowder when they met to open parliament on the 5th of November, 1605. The plot was not carried out, in consequence of Lord Monteagle receiving a letter the night before the deed was to be perpetrated, advising him to stay at home next night, "as God and man concurred to punish the wickedness of the times." The letter was shown to the king, the vaults under the parliament-houses were searched, and Guy Fawkes was discovered with a dark lantern, making arrangements to set fire to thirty-six barrels of gunpowder! Fawkes was a cool, daring, and desperate man; he and the rest of the conspirators were either executed or slain in the attempt to take them prisoners.

In the reign of Charles II. three other plots were formed; the Popish plot, the Meal-tub plot, and the Rye-house plot. The Popish plot was formed by Roman Catholics to secure the accession of James Duke of York. This plot was revealed by Titus Oates, who was rewarded by an annual pension of £1200. The Meal-tub plot was an amusing fabrication concocted by one Dangerfield, as a means to extort money by revealing it. It was so called from the whole scheme of this man being found in a meal-tub, in the house of a woman of loose character. The Rye-house plot was entered into by several persons of fortune, with a view to shoot the king on his way from Newmarket. It was unsuccessful, through the house in which the king lodged catching fire, which accident obliged him to leave eight days earlier than he intended. The plot was discovered, and most of the conspirators put to death. It was called the Rye-house plot because the conspirators met at the Rye-house farm, near Newmarket, to concert their nefarious object. Some portions of the original building yet remain.

James I. was a great trader in titles of nobility. His price for a barony was £10,000; for the title of viscount, £20,000; and for that of an earl, £30,000. He also invented the new title of baronet, and by it raised £225,000; at the rate of £1095 each baronetcy. We can scarcely blame James for so doing; nay, we think he acted shrewdly in this respect. The king got *money*, and many of the English aristocracy obtained their present *honours!* James I. it was who first styled himself, "His Most Sacred Majesty," and called the united kingdom of England and Scotland "Great Britain." While this book is passing

through the press, the title of the sovereign of these realms has been considerably enlarged; for, by the proclamation addressed by her majesty to the people of India, we perceive that Victoria is styled, "By the grace of God Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and of her Colonies and Dependencies in Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia, Defender of the Faith."

Sir Hugh Middleton, a London goldsmith, who lived in the time of the first James, brought the new river from Ware, in Herts, to Islington, in order to supply London with water. This canal is 39 miles in length, and possesses 43 sluices and 215 bridges.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century, merchants and shopkeepers, though growing rich, yet still conducted their businesses in warehouses which would appear mean and miserable to our present city men, and in shops with open fronts, before which the master or one of his apprentices constantly paraded, crying—"What d'ye lack?"

The financial system of banking was adopted during the commonwealth. Before the civil war money was generally deposited in the Mint in London Tower; but, after the war broke out, goldsmiths were employed by merchants as their bankers, A.D. 1653. In the reign of William III. the funded system was introduced by government —that is, the practice of borrowing money for government expenses, and levying taxes to pay the interest. The money was borrowed of rich merchants, who were incorporated into a company, by the name of the Bank of England, in 1694. This was the commencement of the National Debt.

In the reign of Charles II. the celebrated bill of exclusion was passed by the new parliament. By this bill, James Duke of York was excluded, as a Roman Catholic, from his brother's throne. The law then passed is still in force.

In the year 1665 a dreadful disease broke out, which is known in history as the great plague. It ravaged the country, and 90,000 persons died in London alone. The plague broke out in the then filthy suburb of St. Giles. When a house was known to be infected it was shut up, and a red cross was chalked on the door, with these words over it—"Lord have mercy upon us!" Pest-carts went round the city every night, and as the carts passed on, the driver cried, "Bring out your dead!" and the dead, being thrown naked into the carts, were presently shot into a great hole instead of graves. Forty thousand servants, being dismissed by their employers, were turned into the streets; the Londoners would have nothing to do with them, and the country people are said to have driven them back with pitchforks.

A year after—the 3rd of September, 1666—the great fire of London broke out at a bakehouse near to London Bridge, on or about the spot where the monument now stands. The houses being built of wood, the roofs covered with pitch, the floors strewn with rushes, the streets very narrow, and fire-engines not being yet invented, the fire spread with great rapidity. Devastation and ruin spread on every side; the people whose houses were burnt down lived in the open fields about Islington, and were supplied with food by the charitable. Six hundred streets, ninety parish churches, old St. Paul's cathedral, the custom-

house, Guildhall, and four stone bridges, were destroyed. Strange to say, in this conflagration only six lives were lost! This fire verified the proverb—"Out of evil comes good;" for the city was rebuilt with brick and stone instead of wood—the streets were made wider and straighter—pitch was no longer used for roof coverings, nor straw for floors—and the result was, that the plague has never reappeared. Though we have been visited by cholera and various infectious diseases, London is now believed to be the most healthy city in Europe.

In the reign of Charles II. the Haymarket was established in London for the sale of hay and straw. In the same reign two acts of parliament were passed—the "corporation and test act," and the "*habeas corpus* act." The first was a law which required every man who held office under government, to take the sacrament of the Lord's supper in "the church of England" at least once every year. Its object was to exclude Roman Catholics and Dissenters from holding office in the state. This law was very properly abolished in the reign of George IV., A. D. 1828. The "*habeas corpus* act" most wisely provides, that no one shall be sent to prison beyond sea—that the body of every prisoner shall be produced on trial—that a prisoner shall be tried on the term next after his apprehension—and that no one shall be tried twice for the same offence. This law was passed in 1679, two years after the curious "corporation and test act," and still continues in force.

The *British Museum* was founded by Sir Hans Sloane, who in 1753 bequeathed to the nation his collection of natural and artificial curiosities, and his library, consisting of 50,000 volumes of books

and manuscripts, on condition of the payment of £20,000 to his heirs. Montague-house, then one of the largest mansions in the metropolis, was appropriated to its reception. The museum has since been gradually increased by gifts, bequests, and purchases of every species of curiosity—animals, vegetables, minerals, sculptures, books, manuscripts, &c. The number of separate articles, exclusive of books, is upwards of 20,000, among which is the original *Magna Charta*, and original documents connected with it.*

In the reign of James I., Dr. William Harvey of Kent discovered the circulation of the blood—a discovery which changed the whole practice of medicine. For this great discovery he was rewarded by parliament.

Sir Roger L'Estrange, of Norfolk, published the first periodical paper, called "The Public Intelligencer," in 1663. On the 4th of February 1665, was published the first number of "The London Gazette," a government newspaper still in active existence.

In the time of George I. coal-gas was brought into notice by Dr. Hales of Kent; but it was not applied to purposes of light till the reign of the third George. A person by the name of Murdock, of Cornwall, first used it for this purpose in his own house, and in 1815 several of the London streets were lighted by gas.

In the year 1770 an act was introduced into Parliament against hoops, false hair, high heels, and matrimony. Its provisions ran thus:—"That all women, of whatever age, rank, profession, or degree, whether virgins, maids, or widows, that shall, from and after such act, impose upon, seduce,

* See the article on this subject in the Popular Encyclopædia.

and betray into matrimony, any of his Majesty's male subjects, by the scents, paints, cosmetic washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes, &c., shall incur the penalty of the law now in force against witchcraft and like misdemeanours, and that the marriage, upon conviction, shall stand null and void."

In the time of George III. the standing army was greatly increased—the use of armour dispensed with—and the soldiers dressed in a regular national uniform, which has been greatly modified in character from time to time.

Smeaton constructed in 1756 the first lighthouse which was able to resist the violence of the waves.

In 1799, Dr. Jenner discovered that the smallpox may be prevented by vaccination. He observed that milch-cows were often affected with an eruption on their udders proceeding from cowpox; also that those who milked those cows were never affected by the smallpox. Inoculation was first tried on criminals with great success. The operation is performed by taking a very small quantity of ichor from the udder of the cow, and inserting it in the human arm. For this valuable discovery parliament voted Jenner a large sum of money. Smallpox, which was once a fatal disease, has, by means of vaccination, been deprived of nearly all its terrors. A few years since, parliament passed the compulsory vaccination act; and now, in 1858, a public monument has been set up in honour of Jenner, as a great public benefactor. Within the last half century vaccination has made the circuit of the world, to the comfort and the saving of the lives of myriads!

In 1784, balloons were introduced into England by an Italian.

In the time of George III. James Hargreaves, a poor weaver, invented the "spinning jenny"—a contrivance whereby several spindles may be worked by one person. Soon after, Richard Arkwright invented the "twist frame," to supersede the use of finger and thumb in spinning—and Crompton invented the "mule," which combines the twist-frame and the jenny together.

About the same time umbrellas were brought from India, and once produced a riot amongst coachmen, who were afraid they should lose their business!

Sir William Congreave was the inventor of lucifer matches, rockets, &c., and Dr. Gall, the German, was the first who started the science of phrenology. Both these men lived in the time of George IV.

The first electric telegraph was constructed in the year 1837. Steam-boats, now so common, were first brought into use on the Clyde in 1812. The first iron railway was laid down between London and Croydon in 1801—carriages were drawn by locomotive steam-engines at Newcastle in 1824; but the first complete railway was opened between Liverpool and Manchester in 1830. At this moment the gigantic railway system is almost every where at work. The railways of Great Britain have cost upwards of £300,000,000.

John Bull, the sportive collective name of the English people, was first used by Dean Swift. *Jonathan*, or *Brother Jonathan*, is applied in the same way to the people of the United States. The Irish *Paddy* from Patrick; the Scotch *Sawney* from *Saunders*, which comes from Alexander—are

more particularly applied to individuals than to the Irish and Scotch people collectively. *Yankee* also signifies a single American, particularly a native of the Eastern states; whilst *Uncle Sam*, a colloquial and rather low expression derived from the initials of United States, is used to denote the government of the United States collectively. *John Bull* is used by the British themselves to convey the idea of an honest, blunt, but in the main good-natured character. With foreigners, it is used to express the insular peculiarities and prejudices of the nation, and their inability to accommodate themselves to the circumstances of foreign countries.*

In the reign of George I. two famous acts of parliament were passed, the "riot act," and an act to extend the sessions of parliament from three to seven years.

In the same reign occurred the South Sea bubble—a fraudulent scheme devised by Sir John Blunt, an English lawyer. The South Sea Company proposed to buy up the national debt, and to be allowed in return the sole privilege of trading in the South Seas. Thousands of persons gladly bought shares at more than ten times their original value, and as a matter of course were reduced to beggary. The history of this bubble is one of the most remarkable revelations of cupidity, avarice, and folly on record; but it was only one of the many swindling schemes practised about this time. *Bubbles* was a most appropriate name for them.

In the time of George II. the old city gates of London were taken down, partly because they

* Popular Encyclopedia—Part VII., p. 254.

were in a ruinous condition, and partly that a free current of air might keep the streets ventilated.

After the battle of Culloden, the English were barbarously cruel to the Jacobites, four of whom were executed in London; these were the last persons who suffered the punishment of beheading in England. The partisans of James II. were called "Jacobites," from *Jacobus*, the Latin word for James.

In the year 1784 felons were no longer hanged at Tyburn, but at Newgate; and in 1787 convicts were first transported to Botany Bay, in New South Wales. The punishment of sending prisoners to the tread-mill was first adopted in 1823.

In the reign of George II. an alteration was made in the calendar—the New Style was introduced. Julius Cæsar made the year to consist of 365 days and six hours, which was too much by eleven minutes. Pope Gregory rectified the mistake. The calendar was eleven days before the sun in George's time, and hence eleven days were cut out of the month of September. The 3rd of September was called the 14th, and the year was made to begin from the 1st of January, instead of the 24th of March, as formerly. This occurred in the year 1752. The Old Style is sometimes called the Julian, from Julius Cæsar—and the New Style the Gregorian, from Pope Gregory XIII.

Three orders of knighthood were added to that of the Garter during the eighteenth century. The order of St. Andrew, or the Thistle, instituted by Queen Anne in 1703; the motto of the order is, *Nemo me impunè lacessit*, (None shall injure me with impunity.) The order of the Bath was instituted by George I. in 1725; the motto of which is, *Tria juncta in uno*, (Three joined in one, in allusion to the Trinity.) The order of St.

Patrick was instituted by George III. in 1783; the motto being *Quis separabit*, (Who shall separate us?)

In the reign of George the Third, the Grenville Stamp Act was passed, which caused the war with America. Grenville said that the Americans ought to pay a part of the British taxes, as they were protected by the British government, and for this reason ordered their newspapers, and so forth, to be stamped like those in England. So enraged were the colonists at this, that they seized and threw three ship loads of tea into the sea at Boston, which tea belonged to the English. George Washington—a brave and good man—was the commander-in-chief of the American armies. Battles were fought; the English defeated, and the "United States" declared independent in the year 1783.

The Bible, Church Missionary, Hibernian, Jews', and Tract Societies; the Royal Humane Society, to protect persons from drowning; the National Society, to promote the education of the poor; the Philanthropic, to prevent crime and train children; the Agricultural, Horticultural, Geological, Philosophical, and Medical Societies, with some others, date their origin from the reign of George III.

The game licence, and the taxes upon windows, horses, quack medicines, &c., were first imposed in the reign of the third George.

In 1801 the Irish parliament was united to the English, and from that time only one parliament has been held in the three kingdoms. This is called "The Union." The union caused an alteration in the national banner; since then it has borne three crosses—St. George's cross for England, St. Andrew's cross for Scotland, and

St. Patrick's cross for Ireland; hence it is called "The Union Jack." This flag is called a jack because it was so called by the sailors in the reign of James I., who signed "Jacques" on the national banner.

Scotland was joined to England on the 1st of May, 1717. It is strange to us, knowing the vast benefits which have followed the Union, to find that it was done through corruption, against the will of both nations. In Scotland, the popular fury was very great, and threatened to break out in riot and bloodshed. The Duke of Hamilton demanded, in the name of an insulted nationality, if they were to give up all for which their fathers had fought, and if the names of Bruce and Wallace had no potency with the nation for which they so bravely contended, and so heriocally bled? The English foreboded as many and as dire calamities to England as the Scotch did to Scotland; they said the hungry Scotch would come and eat all their substance, take all their trade, and ruin their country!

To protect shopkeepers, William III. made hawkers and pedlars pay an annual tax to government, called "a licence," which is still imposed.

About the year 1772 a material alteration was made in the criminal law of the kingdom. Formerly, when a felon refused to plead, he was stretched out upon his back at full length, and a heavy weight laid upon his breast, which was gradually though slowly increased, till he expired; during which operation he was fed with nothing but a crust of bread and some dirty water. By a bill which was now passed, this barbarous practice was abolished, and all felons refusing to plead are adjudged to be guilty of the crimes laid to their charge.

In the reign of George IV. was laid out Regent's Park, the extent of which is 543 acres. Before this king's time, it consisted of meadows, sheds for cattle, and mean cottages. St. James's Park was only a meadow, through which ran a large straight canal, till the reign of this king. Mechanics' Institutes, founded by Dr. George Birkbeck in 1821; the equalisation, by law, of weights and measures; the Zoological Gardens, the Colosseum, and many other improvements and inventions, were made in the reign of the fourth George.

Free trade was introduced by William Huskisson in 1823. This gentleman was killed at the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, by the wheel of a locomotive crushing his legs.

The most happy event in the reign of William IV. was the emancipation of the colonial slaves, for which the British government paid the enormous sum of £20,000,000. This important event occurred in 1834. There was a noble law passed respecting slaves in the reign of George III., which was, that if a man came to England as a slave, the moment he landed on British ground he should be considered a free man!

The new marriage act was passed in the reign of William IV., the object of which was to allow marriages to be effected in dissenting chapels, or before guardians, without any religious ceremony whatever, as well as in "the church of England," according to ancient custom.

Joseph Lancaster, who devised the "Lancastrian system," whereby the poor are educated by mutual instruction—and Dr. Bell, the projector of national schools, lived in the reign of William IV.

In 1836 the tithes were "commuted"—that is,

landlords were to pay clergymen of the "established church" a certain sum of money instead of tithes "in kind," as of old.

The Thames tunnel—a subterranean passage under the Thames, instead of a bridge over it—was commenced in 1825. Brunel undertook the mighty task, and completed it in 1843, at a total cost of £630,000—two-thirds less than London bridge! Its length is 400 yards. Foot-passengers enter by circular shafts with handsome staircases. It was intended that carriages should enter the tunnel through an immense spiral road, winding twice round a circular excavation of fifty-seven feet deep, and two hundred feet in diameter, but this part of the scheme has never been carried out. The double archways are each fifteen feet high, and each wide enough for a carriage-way and foot-path. The tunnel was opened throughout for foot passengers on the 25th of March, 1843.

In 1846 the corn-laws were entirely repealed, so that corn may now be exported or imported free of government duty.

The reign of our beloved queen is illustrious for the "Great Exhibition of all Nations," which took place in the year 1851. The exhibition was held in a building in Hyde Park, which covered eighteen acres, and enclosed three large trees! This immense building, made entirely of glass, iron, and wood, was supported by hollow pillars; the whole length of the nave was equal to the date of the year—*i. e.*, 1851 feet—the centre breadth of the building was 456 feet, and the height in the central arch was 64 feet. In the building there were used, 400 tons of glass, 300 iron pillars, and 34 miles of gutters to carry off the water. The length of walks in the aisles, galleries, transept, and passages, was 20 miles! Joseph Paxton, gardener to the

Duke of Devonshire, designed the building; and Messrs. Fox and Henderson, of Manchester, built it for £270,000. It was opened on the May-day of the year 1851, and for 140 days was crowded with visiters from all the nations of the earth. The total value of the property contained within the building exceeded £85,000,000, and the number of persons who visited the exhibition was about three and a half millions.

The sale of milk and mackerel is now legalized by Parliament. Timbs, in his "Things not Generally Known," says—"By a statute of the 13th of Car. II., carrying further than had been done under any of our sovereigns since the days of the Heptarchy the prohibition of labour or business upon the Lord's day, exception is made 'for the crying or selling of milk before nine of the clock in the morning, or after four of the clock in the afternoon.' And by a law of 10 Will. III., mackerel are permitted to be sold on Sundays before or after divine service; a provision afterwards recognised by the 2nd of Geo. III., also in favour of fish-carts travelling on Sundays."

Formerly dogs were taught to turn the spit for roasting meat, by continual exercise in a kind of tread-wheel—hence that kind of dog was called "the turnspit." Butler, in his *Hudibras*, says:—

> "But as a dog that turns the spit
> Bestirs himself, and plies his feet
> To climb the wheel, but all in vain,—
> His own weight brings him back again,
> And still he's in the selfsame place
> Where, at his setting out, he was."

Anecdotes, well authenticated, are related of one of a couple of turnspit dogs refusing to work the spit because it was not his turn! Mechanical contrivances have, in comparatively modern times, superseded the employment of the turnspit dog.

At the commencement of this era, the greater part of the people were without education, without political rights, and consequently without that intelligence and union which can alone ensure the fair reward of labour. As is generally the case, sensuality and barbarity went hand in hand. William Howitt tells us that the sanguinary vengeance which Charles took on the leaders of the Commonwealth, immediately on his restoration—the savage persecutions for religion in England and Scotland—the terrible use of the iron boot and the thumbscrew in the latter country—the bloody campaign of Jeffreys in England—the sale of convicts, and the kidnapping of innocent people for the plantations—public whippings, pilloryings, brandings, and tongue-borings, as in the case of James Naylor—all designate a brutal and unfeeling tone of society. Macaulay quotes from writers of the age many other revolting traits of this stamp. He says—"Whigs were disposed to murmur because Stafford was suffered to die without seeing his bowels burned before his face. Tories reviled and insulted Russell as his coach passed from the Tower to the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields. As little mercy was shown by the populace to sufferers of a humbler rank. If an offender was put into the pillory, it was well if he escaped with life, from the shower of brickbats and paving-stones. If he were tied to the cart's tail, the crowd pressed round him, imploring the hangman to give it the fellow well, and make him howl. Gentlemen arranged parties of pleasure to Bridewell on court days, for the purpose of seeing the wretched women that beat hemp there, whipped. A man pressed to death for refusing to plead, or burned for coining, excited less sympathy than is now felt for a galled horse, or an over

driven ox. Fights, compared with which a boxing-match is a refined and humane spectacle, were the favourite diversions of a large part of the town. Multitudes assembled to see gladiators hack each other to pieces with deadly weapons, and shouted with delight when one of the combatants lost a finger or an eye. The prisons were like hells on earth—seminaries of every crime and every disease. At the assizes, the lean and yellow culprits brought with them from their cells to the dock an atmosphere of stench and pestilence, which sometimes avenged them signally on the bench, bar, and jury. But on all this misery, society looked with profound indifference."

The rate of wages for agricultural labourers, wood-cutters, shepherds, and the like, differed in different parts of the country; but in the best it did not average more than four shillings a-week with food, or six shillings without. In Essex, in 1661, the magistrates fixed the rate of wages from March to September, at eightpence a-day with food, and one shilling and twopence without; and for the other months, sixpence with food, and a shilling without. Of course, women had still smaller wages. An act of Elizabeth empowered magistrates to punish whoever gave more or less, and the labourer who received more or less.

The state of the poor was rendered infinitely worse two years after the restoration of Charles II. than it had been, by an act which was passed to prevent poor people settling in any other place than the one where they had previously lived. This was the origin of the law of settlement, which so long harassed the poor, and wasted the parochial funds in litigation. It was not till 1795 —in fact, till the reign of George III.—that this oppressive law was ameliorated, allowing people to

change their place of residence when they saw a better chance of employment elsewhere, so long as they did not come upon the parish.

The moral condition of the people on the accession of Charles the First was deplorable. The utter neglect of education left the bulk of the populace ignorant and depraved, and the long peace which the reigns of the virgin queen and James I. maintained, had so greatly augmented the wealth and prosperity of the nation, that the insolence of illiterate degradation added to the public exhibition of rudeness, debauchery, and immorality. In one respect, however, the people had become much enlightened—they had learned their political rights! From the time that Henry VIII. set the scriptures free in good plain English, the spirit of independence daily gained ground. That spirit often troubled Elizabeth, terrified her successor, and brought his son to the block. The nation demanded freedom of worship, and Charles I. sought for uniformity, and, as Milton has it, "would have his conscience an incommunicable but an universal conscience—the whole kingdom's conscience. Thus, what he seems to fear lest we should ravish from him, is our chief complaint that he obtruded upon us. We never forced him to part with his conscience; but it was he that would have forced us to part with ours." * The nation desired an increase of personal liberty, a more distinct line to be drawn between the royal prerogative and the power of the commons, and guarantee that the ancient laws of the realm should be preserved. Charles strove to make his will the supreme law, and the liberty of his people to depend entirely on his graciousness. Between two such opposing principles war was an inevitable

* Milton—Iconoclastes.

consequence.* To the student of history that "consequence" is well known—the people passed the following resolutions:—

1. That the people, under God, are the origin of all just power.

2. That the Commons of England, assembled in parliament, being chosen by and representing the people, have the supreme authority in this nation.

3. That whatever is enacted and declared law by the Commons of England, assembled in parliament, hath the form of law; and all the people of this nation are included thereby, although the consent of the king and house of peers be not had thereunto.

Charles was tried, found guilty, and condemned, as a "tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public and implacable enemy of the Commonwealth," to be beheaded. The execution took place in front of Whitehall, on the 30th of January, 1649. On the pedestal of the king's statue was inscribed, "Exit Tyrannus, Regum Ultimus!"—The tyrant is gone, the last of the kings.

We might say much about that mighty man Cromwell, but space compels us to be very brief. Notwithstanding the amount of pauperism, the nation was never in a more prosperous condition than during the government of Oliver Cromwell. Whatever constitutional principles "were violated in the struggle which resulted in the Commonwealth, whatever miseries were inflicted during its violent warfare, and however brief was the period of its existence, the advantages to us and to all mankind were incalculable in their amount, and eternal in their nature. By it the royal, mysterious, indefatigable, and protean power called pre-

* Langford—English Democracy, p. 25.

rogative, a law above all law, was struck down, and, if not destroyed, made subject to parliament; and the powers and jurisdiction of parliament, the great legislative and judicial authority, placed on a clear and immovable basis. Since then kings have ceased to be a terror; no man is in peril of being dragged from his home, to be tortured and robbed in Star-chambers and High Commission Courts, at the pleasure of the prince and his parasites; and if we are ill-governed, we have only ourselves to thank for it. Such is the debt of everlasting gratitude that we owe to the great men of the Commonwealth, and to none more than to Oliver Cromwell, the dictator." * We have only space here for one paragraph on Cromwell's foreign rule; it is from Walter Savage Landor. He says the shadow of Cromwell's name overawed the most confident and haughty. He intimidated Holland; he humiliated Spain; and he twisted the supple Mazarin, the ruler of France, about his finger. All those nations had then attained the summit of their prosperity; all were unfriendly to the rising power of England; all trembled at the authority of that single man, who coerced at once her aristocracy, her priesthood, and her factions. No agent of equal potency and equal moderation had appeared on earth before.

The reign of Charles II. was a disastrous one. During his weak rule all the vigour of the English seemed lost; truly did they fall on evil times, for the doctrines of passive obedience, of non-resistance to kings, of divine right and irresponsibility, were dominant, and the English church well merited to be called as "abusive, and much more servile, than the Roman church had ever been,"—eglise aussi

* William Howitt.

abusive que l'ait jamais été l'eglise romaine, et beaucoup plus servile.*

James II. was a stubborn, narrow-minded, bigoted, and revengeful tool of holy "mother church;" his aims and hopes were the conversion of England to the religion of Rome. Priests were his guides, and

"Cursed is the crown that must the cowl obey." †

At court he established a father confessor, and once asked Ronguilla, the Spanish ambassador, this amusing question—"Is it not the custom in Spain for the king to consult his confessor?" Ronguilla replied—"Yes, and that is why our affairs succeed so ill." ‡ Of course, such a king as James II. was not the man to rule the English, and the end of his tyranny was his flight, and the establishment of William III. on the throne of England. "By the triumph of the Orange revolution, despotism was for ever struck from its pedestal." §

One of God's eternal laws is, that nothing shall stand still—a nation is always changing either for better or for worse—a people either marches on towards perfection, or retrogrades. Those who have carefully read and studied the history of England and its inhabitants, well know what great, grand, and noble strides the Britons have taken towards perfection. Mr. Langford, a gentleman entitled to much respect, in speaking of the condition of the people from the year 1688 to the French Revolution, tells us that "the popular ignorance was dense, and, with but few honourable exceptions, the education of the people

* Guizot—Histoire de la Civilization, p. 228.
† Wordsworth.
‡ Hume—Hist of England, Vol. I., p. 84.
§ Wade—Hist. of the Middle and Working Classes, p. 134.

was considered a foolish, if not a wicked thing. To have proposed it would have been deemed Quixotic beyond measure; nor was it till the close of the war with France, in 1816, that any attempts were made to remove the national ignorance, or improve the educational institutions of the country. The English laws were also of the most draconic nature: death was the one punishment for all crimes. If a boy stole five shillings from the pocket of any one who would prosecute, the crime was capital, the punishment death. Horse-stealing, sheep-stealing, burglary, and a host of other offences were all punished with death."

Harriet Martineau, in the introduction to her "History of the Peace," p. 17, says—"The records of assizes, in the *Chronicle of Events*, are sickening to read. The vast and absurd variety of offences, for which men and women were sentenced to death by the score, out of which one-third, or so, were really hanged, gives now an impression of devilish levity in dealing with human life; and must at the time have precluded all rational conception, on the part of many, as to what law is—to say nothing of that attachment to it, and reverence and trust in regard to it, which are indispensable to the true citizen temper."

Since the year 1815, the nation has advanced in the right direction more rapidly and securely than ever it did since the Roman set foot in this island. Reform after reform has been won by the people from an opposing legislature. In 1817, Mr. Canning said—"I deny the assumption that the House of Commons, as it stands, is not, to all practical purposes, an adequate representation of the people—I deny that it requires any amendment."* And yet this was the House of Commons

* Hansard—Vol. XXV., p. 130.

that, in 1793, "the Society of the Friends of the People, in their petition, offered, among other things, to prove that peers and the treasury actually nominated ninety-seven members, and procured by influence the return of seventy more, making together one hundred and sixty-seven—that ninety-one individual commoners in the country procured the election of one hundred and thirty-nine—and that one hundred and sixty individuals absolutely returned three hundred and six members, a majority of the entire House of Commons." * On the 7th of June, 1832, the people obtained the Reform Bill.

As a picture of pulpit manners in the reign of "the finest gentleman in Europe," we give the following from Cyrus Redding's "Fifty Years' Recollections," descriptive of Dr. Parr at church: —"Parr drew my attention very awkwardly on entering his church one Sunday morning while he was reading the lessons; he stopped, and fixed the eyes of the whole congregation upon myself and a lady, who was my companion, by saying to his servant, 'Sam, show that lady and gentleman into my pew.' In reading the lessons, when he came to a wrong translation in a passage, he would stop and say, 'This is not correctly translated, it should have been rendered so and so;' or, 'This passage has a different meaning from the original: I would not have you in error about any thing, my good parishioners.' In reading the proclamation against vice and immorality, he began—it was about the time of the Queen Caroline's prosecution—'My beloved brethren, you must not be deceived in any thing. I am going to read the king's proclamation against vice and

* Roebuck—History of the Whig Ministry—Vol. I., p. 196.

immorality. You will take notice that it is not issued in his majesty's private character, but in that of a ruler and king—it has nothing to do with his majesty as a private individual.'"

Every measure, says Mr. Langford, "which tends to increase the communication of the people with each other, and break down the restrictions of class legislation, by opening to all what was once but the privilege of the few, is another step in popular progress, and an aid to future advancement." Such was the postal reform of Mr. Rowland Hill—the Penny Postage Bill became law on the 17th of August, 1839, and was first put into operation on the 10th of January, 1840.

It would require a large volume merely to enumerate the numerous achievements of the people during this reign—the glorious reign of our beloved Queen Victoria! This brief period of history has witnessed a great progress in education; rapid advance is being made to a wise, liberal, and free system of national education. Sectarianism throws many obstacles in the way; but ere long there will be a grand and noble change. The best of our writers now write for the people, and according to their merits receive popular applause. To this period of our history belongs the origin of savings banks, of insurance and provident societies, the formation of temperance, freehold land, and building societies; the commencement of free libraries and museums; the opening of public parks, arboretums, baths, and wash-houses; the establishment of schools of design, mechanics' institutions, collections of works of art, and general attention to the refinements and amenities of life. Prison discipline has been improved; the treatment of lunatics and other unfortunate mem-

bers of the community humanized, and inspired by the spirit of love and gentleness.*

So vast and certain is the progress of the nation, that the people are daily taking some link from the chain which bound them, and are daily walking this fair earth with freer, firmer step, more upright form, and sparkling eye—sparkling with the consciousness of manhood, freedom, and power. The birthright of every man is "freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." †

Tennyson has truly said of England—

> "It is the land that freemen till,
> That sober-suited Freedom chose,
> A land where, girt with friends or foes,
> A man may speak the thing he will;
> A land of settled government,
> A land of just and old renown,
> Where Freedom broadens slowly down
> From precedent to precedent."

And Wordsworth of English folk—

> "We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung
> Of earth's best blood, have titles manifold."

* Langford—English Democracy, Ch. VI.
† Herbert Spencer—Social Statics, Ch. IV., sec. 1, p. 102.

THE END.

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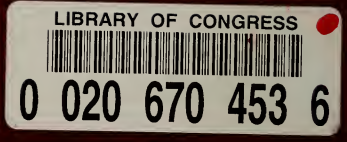
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